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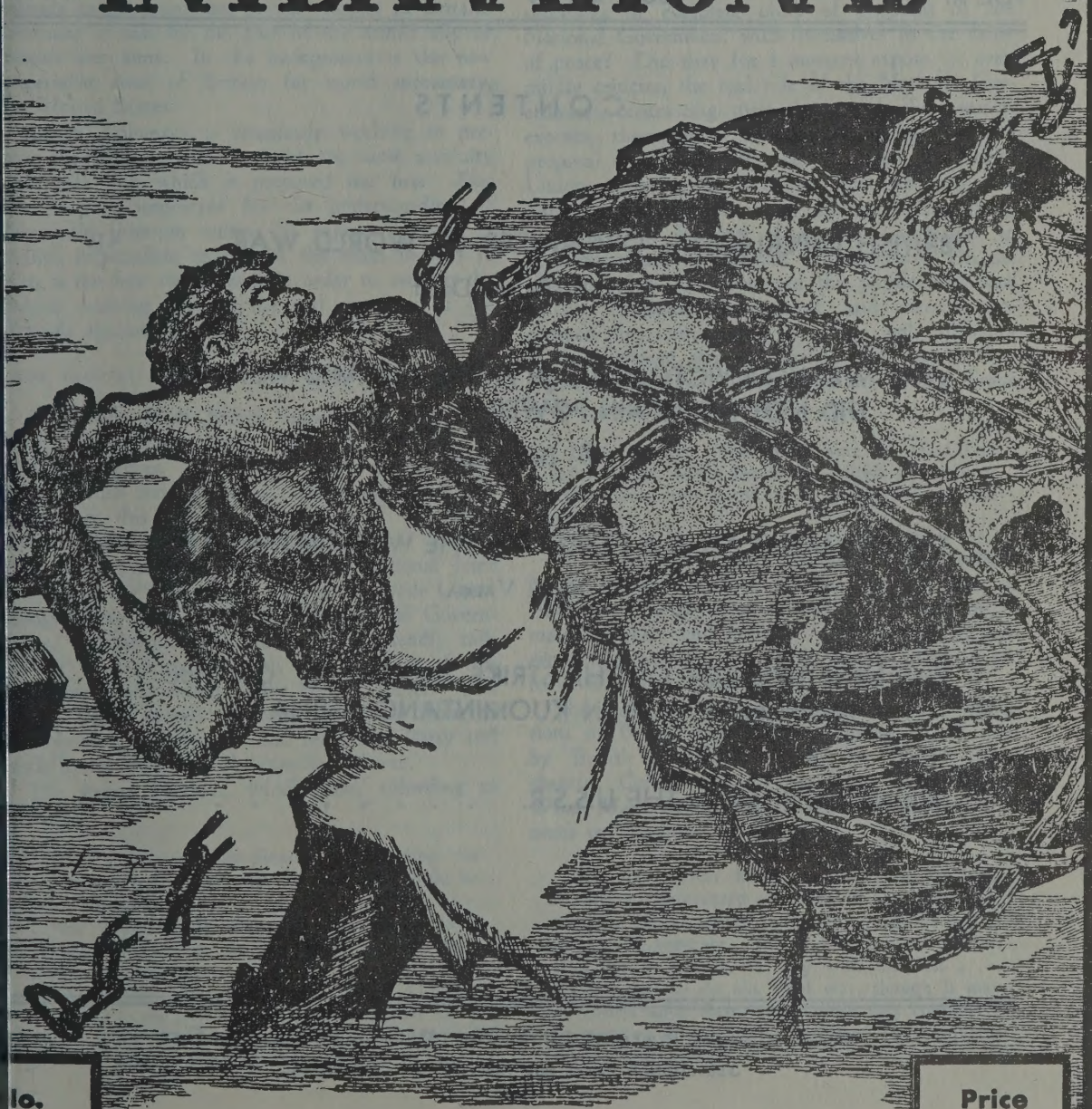

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BRITISH IMPERIALISM—ORGANIZER OF WORLD WAR

By R. PALME DUTT

TWENTY years ago England plunged into the World War which its diplomacy had for a decade assiduosly prepared in order to crush its principal rival for world supremacy, Germany.

Today British diplomacy is no less actively preparing the second world war. Only the enemies are changed. The principal enemy now is the Soviet Union, the fortress of the world revolution and of socialism, whose existence is regarded as a menace to the crumbling colonial empire of Britain. Germany is cast for the part of the armed ally of British war aims. In the background is the new imperialist rival of Britain for world supremacy, the United States.

British diplomacy is ceaselessly working to prepare the second world war with the same assiduity and skill with which it prepared the first. This fact is very important for the understanding of the world situation today. To expose the role of British imperialism as one of the main incitors to war, is the first urgent task in order to awaken the British working class to the real character of the struggle against war.

THE PACIFIST PRETENCES OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

As before 1914, British imperialism covers its work of war-preparations with a camouflage of pacifist pretences. In contrast to the period before 1914, British imperialism is directly supported and assisted in this task by the leaders of the Labor Party already before the outbreak of war.

In May, 1934, the leaders of the National Joint Council of the Labor Party and of the Trade Union Congress met the leaders of the National Government, MacDonald and Simon, in a friendly talk on the advance to war. An official report of this conversation was issued by the Foreign Office. This official report reveals the complete united front of the National Government and the Labor Party and trade union leaders on the question of war.

The Prime Minister, MacDonald, according to the report,

> " . . . expressed his pleasure at receiving the deputation and wished that such contacts could be more frequent.
>
> "He could assure them that he shared their anxieties. Like them, as they knew, his one consistent aim was peace.
>
> "As regards disarmament, the British Government had in the past two years used all their influence. They alone had put forward a practical plan for general disarmament.
>
> "The British Government had taken the risk of setting an example in disarmament which had unhappily not been followed. . . .
>
> "Meanwhile they would continue to use every effort in the cause of international peace."

The Foreign Secretary, Simon, "welcomed" the suggestions of the Labor deputation, and declared how "glad" he was to hear them.

How did the Labor deputation meet these protestations of complete unity of purposes of the National Government with themselves in the cause of peace? Did they for a moment expose, or even mildly criticize, the real role of the National Government, contrasting their deeds with their words, exposing their role of smashing and defeating every proposal of serious disarmament from the Soviet Union, exposing the role of their warships and punitive expeditions in every quarter of the globe, exposing their backing of Japanese aggression in Manchuria and of German re-armament? On the contrary, they fully accepted the pacific intentions of the National Government, and thereby proclaimed their unity with it. The only difficulty in their opinion was the warlike intentions of foreign governments. Citrine, Secretary of the Trade Union Congress, declared:

> "The question arose, what were the remaining forces in the world beside the British government which could be counted on to maintain peace and stability?"

Thus only the British National Government—in the opinion of these faithful labor servants of "their own" imperialism—"*could be counted on to maintain peace and stability*". No imperialist government could desire a more perfect blank check to cover its war preparations.

This myth of the profoundly "peaceful" intentions of British imperialism is spread on all sides by British Laborism. Thus the "Left" Labor theorist, Cole, writes in his latest book entitled *What Marx Really Meant* (*i.e.*, What Cole Proposes to Substitute for Marx):

> "Nor are Great Britain and France, the two leading parliamentary countries, in any danger of military defeat in the near future, provided that they stand together. If another war came soon, they would win it, as they won the last . . . These countries do not want war, though it may be forced upon them, and though they could rely on winning it in a military sense. Their governments want peace."

"Their governments want peace." British imperialism "can be counted on to maintain peace and stability". This is the basic lie which is used to lull the masses and hide the realities of war preparations. *This is the lie which requires to be smashed and destroyed in the light of the realities of British foreign policy, if the workers are not to be once again caught unawares as in* 1914.

HOW BRITISH IMPERIALISM PREPARED THE WORLD WAR OF 1914

In these circumstances it is more than ever opportune to recall how British imperialism prepared and organized the first world war. For the active preparation of this war directly took place under a Liberal-Radical "pacifist" cabinet, supported by the votes of the Labor Party.

Up to the very last moment of entry into the war British diplomacy concealed its extremely active war preparations under a veil of liberal-pacifism, declared total abstention from European commitments, and a show of anxiety at all costs to maintain peace, with a success which succeeded in deceiving, not only the masses at home, but even the destined enemy whose destruction was being prepared. Only the subsequent publication of a portion of the secret documents, and the abundant memoirs of the statesmen and generals concerned, have finally revealed the completeness and thoroughness with which the world war was calculated, prepared and pressed forward by Britain, both diplomatically and strategically.

The Manifesto of the First Congress of the Communist International in 1919, proclaimed:

> "Up to the very outbreak of war British diplomacy stood by with vizor down in mysterious secrecy. The Government of the City was careful not to have it known that it intended to take part in the war on the side of the Entente, so as not to alarm the Berlin Government and put off the war. London wanted war; hence their action to make Berlin and Vienna build their hopes on English neutrality, while Paris and Petrograd were sure of England's intervention.
>
> "The war, which had been prepared for decades, broke out through direct and conscious provocation by Great Britain."

This analysis is undoubtedly correct. In the critical years 1905-1914 the British hand lay behind the steadily closing encirclement of German imperialism, patiently and laboriously preparing a superior concentration of forces against the enemy, but concealing all intentions until the favorable hour had come to strike. Britain endeavored to pose as the moderating and conciliating force between the Franco-Russian Alliance and the Triple Alliance, at the same time as it was in fact exacerbating the antagonisms and preparing the war for its own gain at the expense of both sides. Only once before the war was the mask dropped for a moment in 1911, when there was a danger of a Franco-German understanding, and Britain hastily intervened with the bellicose Mansion House speech of the then supposedly "ultra-pacifist" Lloyd George, in order to prevent it. The Liberal Government of Asquith, Lloyd George, Haldane, Grey and Churchill, which ceaselessly prepared the war throughout 1906-1914, evolved the most elaborate and subtle technique to cover these praparations, a technique of alliances which were no alliances in form and were alliances in fact, of commitments which could be solemnly denied in parliament at the very same time as the general staffs were drawing up their detailed plans of joint action, of Peace Missions and Armament Holiday offers at the same time as armaments were being gigantically increased. This technique served, not only to deceive petty bourgeois pacifism and the mass of the workers, but also to draw Germany into the trap of a heavily unequal war, by encouraging to the very last day the hope and expectation of British neutrality.

The whole of this technique has since become a standard model for all the imperialist powers in the preparation of the second world war.

HOW BRITISH IMPERIALISM IS PREPARING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

This process of the preparation of the first world war is more than ever important to recall today, twenty years later, when we are faced with the ever closer menace of the second world war.

The foreign policy of the National Government is widely attacked by its critics for weakness, uncertainty and vacillation. At one moment it is accused of too great conciliation to Germany, at another of too great subservience to France. At one moment the National Government courts Germany and offends France. At another moment the National Government courts France and offends Germany. Divisions of opinion are widely expressed in bourgeois quarters as to the policy to be followed. These divisions are reflected in Parliament and are even reported as reflected in the Cabinet. In extreme forms, press campaigns are conducted, on the one side for a complete British-French military alliance, on the other side for the repudiation of Locarno and a policy of isolation from European questions. Wooing of America and affirmation of Anglo-American unity as the pillar of world stability are combined with ill-concealed hostility to America and constant friction. Frequent reaffirmation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as continuing in spirit even if not in the letter, is combined with sharp antagonism to Japan in a whole series of economic and other questions. Thus the picture appears a

picture of considerable uncertainty and confusion.

Yet a closer examination will show that these varying strands represent in reality varying aspects of a basic identity of policy.

Ever since Versailles, British policy has in fact pursued very clearly marked and consistent aims despite the fluctuations necessitated by changing circumstances:

First, while maintaining the essential basis of Versailles, the alliance with France and the League of Nations, to weaken French predominance by assisting German restoration to power and by close relations with Italy.

Second, to draw Germany from the Eastern to the Western orientation.

Third, on this basis to build the bloc of Western imperialism under British hegemony.

Fourth, to co-operate with Japan outside Europe.

Fifth, on this basis to build the bloc against the Soviet Union and against the United States.

Sixth, to direct the main aim against the Soviet Union as the immediate principal enemy, and to delay so far as possible the inevitable conflict with the United States.

Through all the vicissitudes of post-war diplomacy the continuous development of this policy may be traced; and *it has at the present moment reached a high degree of fruition for the building of the ultimate war bloc. The moment is again approaching when Britain may throw down the vizor and reveal its open war aims.*

In the period up to the world crisis of 1931, the outstanding landmarks of this policy were Locarno on the European side, and the Naval Limitation Agreement with the United States (Washington, 1922, and London, 1930), on the extra-European side. It was manifest that the signing of the Locarno Treaties in 1925 marked at the time a big stage of advance in this policy towards the restoration in principle of Germany as an equal power, the drawing of Germany under Stresemann from an Eastern to a Western orientation, the guaranteeing of peace on the Western frontiers, and thus the building of the bloc of Western imperialism against Communism. This objective was clearly stated at the time.

But Locarno failed in the full realization of its object, although marking an important stage forward. For Germany still followed the two-sided or "re-insurance" policy, and followed up Locarno with the Berlin Soviet-German Treaty, renewing Rapallo, in 1926. Britain at the time was tied up with the General Strike. When the General Strike had been successfully settled, and Britain struck its blow against the Soviet Union in 1927, it found itself isolated. Birkenhead's journey to Berlin for support met with no response. The Chinese Revolution concentrated British attention. At the same time, from 1927 onwards (Geneva Naval Conference breakdown) Anglo-American antagonism came sharply to the front. And in 1929 came the world economic crisis. The whole policy was delayed. Japanese aggression in the Far East brought again strong preparations for attack in the spring of 1932. But the opposition of the United States, the internal economic difficulties of Britain, the Empire difficulties and Ottawa, and the Lausanne and debts complications, the persistently active peace policy of the Soviet Union, as well as the uncertain inner situation and rapid growth of the forces of the proletarian revolution in Germany, hindered the advance and held over the issue.

It was the victory of fascism in Germany in 1933 *that has brought to the front again, counter-revolutionary anti-Soviet war under British leadership.* Here at last was seen the means of smashing one of the principal obstacles in the path, the German revolutionary working class movement, and securing in German fascism an obedient tool, provided it could be turned from its anti-Western threats and concentrated on the line of aggression in the East.

From this point British policy has gone actively forward, taking advantage of the universally developing war tendencies, arising from the world economic crisis and sharpening antagonisms, on the path to war.

In the existing world situation the two most vitally agressive powers which are openly driving to war are German imperialism and Japanese imperialism.

If, however, the situation is examined more closely, behind both will be found the British hand. *Without British support neither Germany nor Japan could for a moment maintain their present aggressive role.* Here lies the real crux of the present world situation.

In relation to Germany, this process has been brought glaringly to the front over the question of German re-armament.

The British National Government has supported and made possible, both diplomatically, and also technically, German rearmament.

The technical side is worth noting. At the annual meeting of Vickers, Ltd., the giant semi-official armaments trust of British imperialism, held in March, 1934, the question was raised with regard to certain advertisements inserted in the German press by Vickers of tanks and other weapons forbidden by Versailles. The answer was given that these advertisements had been inserted in the German press in order to reach the South American public (subsequent inquiry elicited that the proportion of circulation of the journals in question in South America was minute). The question was then

directly asked by a shareholder who was a Member of Parliament, whether Vickers had not been in fact assisting in re-arming Germany, even in contravention of Versailles. The answer of the Chairman, Sir Herbert Lawrence, was sufficiently revealing:

> "I cannot give you an assurance in definite terms, but I can tell you that nothing is done without the complete sanction and approval of our own Government."

The diplomatic side is even more important.

From the moment of the victory of German fascism (which was already closely related with British Conservative circles), the British National Government has constituted itself the patron-protector of German fascism and of its armament. Already in March, 1933, MacDonald proceeded immediately to Geneva to proclaim to the world that "Either Germany is given justice and freedom, or Europe will risk destruction", and to put forward the British plan for doubling the German army. Thence he passed on to Rome and evolved with Mussolini the Four-Power Pact, or most direct expression of the aim of the block of Western imperialism for a single policy "in all questions, political and non-political, European and extra-European". "These were the four powers", explained MacDonald in a press interview at the time, "which, if the worst were to come, would have to bear the brunt of the work". Since "the worst" evidently meant war, the question might be asked against whom Britain intended that the block of Britain, Germany, Italy and France should conduct war? The answer was sufficiently obvious. In April followed the British rupture of trade relations with the Soviet Union. Within twenty-four hours of the British rupture followed the Japanese ultimatum to the Soviet Union over the Chinese-Eastern Railway.

But this first stage of the offensive in 1933 broke down over a series of complications. French hostility to the military concessions to Germany was strongly aroused, and France drew to closer relations with the Soviet Union (Herriot and Cot Missions). Germany signed the renewal of the German-Soviet Treaty. Thus the Four-Power Pact was for the moment successfully broken by Soviet diplomacy, which proceeded to add the ring of non-aggression pacts with the border States. At the same time Anglo-American antagonisms grew acute with the failure of the *MacDonald-Roosevelt meeting in the spring,* the open currency war of the dollar and the pound, and the resounding fiasco of the World Economic Conference; the United States in the autumn entered into relations with the Soviet Union. The British attack was again isolated, and it was demonstrated that the whole aim of its strategy which was to build up a simultaneous Western and Eastern combination, had failed on this occasion.

British policy was accordingly compelled to maneuvers. Modifications were made in the British "Disarmament" (*i.e.,* Rearmament) Plan to allow concessions to French views at the expense of Germany. This led to strong German resentment at British "desertion" and Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations in the autumn of 1933. Such an outcome was not at all in accordance with British calculations, and it looked as if the carefully prepared British plans were in danger of breakdown.

There followed the long process of separate and secret negotiations through the winter and spring. Britain urged a French-German understanding on the basis of German re-armament. The National Government Minister, Eden, saw Hitler in Berlin in February; "the discussions were conducted in a very friendly spirit . . . he and Hitler appear to have got on very well together" (*Times,* Feb. 21, 1934). The protracted British-French exchange of notes revealed sharp divergence, culminating in the deadlock following the French note of April 17 and the open Barthou-Simon duel at Geneva in May. French pleas of the glaring breach of Versailles were dismissed by Britain with indifference. The French charges of the breach of Versailles, declared the *Times* (March 24, 1934), no doubt have "flawless logic" on their side, "but logic seldom has the last word in international affairs". Between the British and the French, explained the *Observer* (April 22, 1934), there is,

> " . . . one deep difference. They are logical. We are realists. They say that German re-armament ought not to be allowed. We say that nothing on earth can now prevent it."

The necessity of German re-armament remains the one fixed point all through.

> "No convention could be conceivably accepted by Germany which did not allow her a certain measure of re-armament. That point has been explicitly conceded in principle by both the British and Italian Governments." (*Times,* April, 19, 1934.)

Meanwhile, behind all these diplomatic negotiations German re-armament went forward at headlong speed, with the assistance of British armaments manufacturers.

Today in fact and in practice German re-armament has won by the support of Britain and Italy. French verbal protests have been powerless to prevent this. France endeavors to rebuild the weakened Versailles block (the Barthou tour), and to develop

relations with the Soviet Union (Barthou-Litvinoff meetings at Geneva) in order to strengthen its position. But France has been in no position to take action to prevent German re-armament. The Belgian Prime Minister, De Broqueville, was only stating facts when he stated it was impossible to prevent German re-armament since any attempt to take active measures to prevent it would be met with the opposition of Britain and Italy.

But the re-armament of Germany, and more especially of German fascism, means the enormous acceleration of the advance of war. The direct responsibility for this rests with Britain.

With what object and against whom has Britain pressed forward the re-armament of Germany? For the purpose of war against France? Obviously not. On the contrary, having once secured its objective of German re-armament, Britain is now straining every nerve to strengthen the *British-French Alliance,* and even considering a closer direct military alliance (the Weygand visit to London in June).

Britain has pressed forward the re-arming of Germany for the purposes of the war on the Eastern front—to draw the gathering many-sided war crisis in Europe into the channels of the war on the Soviet Union.

THE PROBLEMS OF BRITISH-JAPANESE AND BRITISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS

This policy is linked up with the aim of the Japanese offensive against the Soviet Union in the Far East. Here, however, a number of further complications have arisen.

The long established *Anglo-Japanese Alliance* has in fact continued in practice, despite its formal abrogation since Washington in 1932. This has been particularly conspicuous since the Manchurian war in 1931. Britain has consistently supported and protected Japanese aggression in the Far East, both against the diplomatic opposition moves in the League of Nations and against the attempted pressure of the United States. The repeated appeals of the United States to Britain for common action against Japanese aggression in the Far East have met with no success, and Japan, on this basis—and only by this support of Britain—has been able to get away with the spoils. At the same time British armaments manufacturers have been actively supplying Japan with arms.

The object of this line of policy has been transparently clear—to support Japan in its capacity as opponent of and as a balance against the United States, and above all, as an immediate instigator of war in the Far East against the Soviet Union.

But this policy has not been plain sailing. In the first place, there is the intense and very rapidly sharpening economic conflict of British and Japanese interests in the Far East and even today throughout the world. Japanese cheap goods have today replaced the old pre-war nightmare of German cheap goods as the most dangerous and active immediate competitor driving out British goods in the markets of the world, and even successfully invading the British home market. The extreme resentment and anger of British manufacturers, and especially of Lancashire, has been only with difficulty partially stifled and repressed by the Government on the urgent representations of the Foreign Office. The prolonged Anglo-Japanese trade negotiations completely broken down in April; and in May the National Government was compelled to proclaim the launching of open trade war against Japan by cutting down colonial markets against its goods.

Further, Japanese expansionist aims are directed above all to China, and here come in conflict with strongly entrenched British interests. This was sharply shown in the Japanese declaration of April 17, 1934, to the effect that nobody other than Japan has the right to interfere in the affairs of China. It may be noted that this declaration coincided with the British-French deadlock of April 17, thus taking advantage of the confusion of the European diplomatic situation. By this declaration Japan publicly announced its claim to overlordship over all China, and warned off all other powers. But Britain is in fact the largest dominant financial and monopolist power in China. British resentment against Japan was extreme.

Nevertheless, in spite of this open threat, the British Foreign Office stood by Japan, and refused to register any protest against the new Japanese offensive. The American approaches for a joint Anglo-American stand against the Japanese offensive, strongly voiced in the American press, were ignored. The direct Japanese official statement that "the Nine-Power Treaty is dead" (War Office statement in the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun*) and the no less direct statement by the Japanese Ambassadors in Berlin and Washington, warning off the financial activities of other powers in China, were brushed aside by the Foreign Secretary, Simon, as not within his cognizance: "His Majesty's Government are content to leave this particular question where it is." Thus once again, as over Manchuria, was laid bare the still continuing Anglo-Japanese Alliance—against the Soviet Union and against the United States.

At the same time Anglo-American relations develop to increasing sharpness. The breakdown of the London Economic Conference in 1933 has been followed by the breakdown of the debts negotiations in 1934 and British open default. The failure of the United States to win British support against the Japanese offensive has influenced American-

Soviet relations. The British Naval authorities call openly for the ending of the London Naval Treaty, and the inauguration of a big naval building program.

All these questions of the Far Eastern situation come to a head with the approaching expiration of the Naval Treaty in 1935 and the preliminary negotiations for the new Conference. Japan has already given warning of its intention to demand the ending of the old ratios and the establishment of full naval parity. The Roosevelt Government has put into effect the largest American naval building program of the post-war period, covering an expenditure of $570,000,000 over a period of five years on the construction of 102 warships. The British Admiralty has tabled proposals, in preparations for the Conference, for heavily increased naval building. In these conditions, increasing doubt is developing whether the Conference can be held with any prospect of success.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM COMES INTO THE OPEN—FORWARD TO INCREASED ARMAMENTS

Today the declarations of all the leading British statesmen on the question of war have begun to take on a new tone. The failure of all attempts at disarmament is loudly proclaimed, and the inevitability of a new world war in the near future begins to be affirmed. The lesson is drawn that all efforts must be concentrated on increasing and strengthening British armaments.

Already last October the Conservative Conference passed unanimously a resolution which, in the words of the *Times*, "If literally interpreted, enjoins an immediate measure of re-armament by this country". Baldwin declared to this Conference:

> "If Britain found herself on some lower rating, and some other country had higher figures, that country must come down, and we must go up, until equality was reached."

The First Sea Lord, Admiral Chatfield, announced in October at the Cutlers' Feast in Sheffield (that is, before the assembled armaments makers):

> "The nation must take stock of its defence position and consider whether in its present naval expenditure it is maintaining a naval strength in accordance with its policy."

Earl Beatty underlined this at the Navy League dinner:

> "The country must never again bind itself to any such unsafe limit (*i.e., the London Naval* Treaty), but must as before build the naval cruisers needed for the exceptional responsibilities we have on the seven seas."

Immediately after, at the end of November, came the Government's announcement of the urgent necessity to increase the air force by at least ten squadrons, and build upwards to the level of the strongest existing air force. This demand has been actively taken up and echoed throughout the press.

> "We require not another hundred machines, but a thousand. We need one hundred squadrons, something more than double our existing strength. That is the new 'irreducible minimum'." (*Observer*, Dec. 3, 1933.)

The principal leader of the opposition at the Geneva Conference to all proposals for the abolition of aerial warfare and air-bombing was Britain.

The British budget in the spring provided for the increase of armaments expenditures by over five million pounds. In addition, provision was openly made for possible further increases during the year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Neville Chamberlain, declared:

> "If other nations either will not or cannot follow our example and reduce armaments, the government would be failing in its duty if it did not proceed to restore the deficiencies that now exist.
>
> "If in the future the government should declare that in its opinion it is necessary still further to increase our expenditure on defence, I am certain the country will not refuse to grant us the money."

At the same time the declarations gather on the prospect of a new war. In the disarmament debate in the House of Commons in February, Churchill declared with regard to the changed general outlook:

> "In Mr. Baldwin's late Conservative Government they thought it right to say as a rule of guidance that there would be no major war within ten years in which this country would be engaged. No one could take that principle as a guide today; and no government, however peace-loving, could possibly arrange the basis of their naval and military organization on such an assumption."

And in response to the American journalist, Knickerbocker ("Will War Come in Europe?", published in May, 1934), Churchill replied:

> "It is not far distant. Perhaps a year, perhaps eighteen months."

Lloyd George wrote in the beginning of June:

> "Today the prospect of another war is the stable talk of every club in Europe. Some of the astutest men I know will offer you a bet that there will be another great war—greater than the last—within two years."

The National Government Minister, Duff Cooper, Financial Secretary to the War Office, was even more explicit, speaking at King's College, London, on May 14:

> "The Disarmament Conference is at its last gasp. In the coming year large sums of money will be spent in increased armaments. *Britain will be compelled to come in if there is another war.*"

When the pointers to war are given so directly by the leaders and spokesmen of British imperialism, it implies that the danger of a new war is hanging directly over us.

The most serious sign of all of the maturing of the British war plans is the rapid change-over already beginning in the utterances of the British Labor and trade union leaders toward preparing the open support of the coming imperialist war.

At the Hastings Labor Party Conference last October the sentiment of the mass of the delegates against the menacing war, and the criticism of the official ban against the anti-war movement was so strong that a resolution was carried pledging the Labor Party,

> "To take no part in war and to resist it with the whole force of the Labor Movement, and to seek consultation forthwith with the Trades Union and Cooperative Movements with a view to deciding and announcing to the country what steps, including a general strike, are to be taken to organize the opposition of the organized working class movement in the event of war or threat of war."

This resolution, which came, not from the Executive, but from the body of the Conference, was carried unanimously with the assent of the Executive, which knew that it could not afford openly to oppose it. But from the moment of its carrying, the entire efforts of the official machine have been directed to destroying even this very incomplete and confused anti-war resolution and making it a dead letter. Official "interpretations" of the resolution were immediately issued, explaining that the resolution was only to be regarded as opposing "illegal war, *i.e.*, . . . war not in accordance with the League of Nations, Locarno, or other treaties by which the country might be bound; any such war would be supported by the Labor Movement". This was further borne out by the issue at the same time of the official Labor Party pamphlet *Labor's Foreign Policy* in the name of Henderson. In this pamphlet Henderson demanded that a special "Peace Act" should be passed. The character of this "Peace Act" he made quite clear:

> "The government shall have full power to take all the economic, financial and other measures required to enable it immediately to fulfill all our national obligations under the Covenant, the Locarno treaties and other instruments by which we may be bound."

This is the official Labor policy—"*to fulfil all our national obligations under the Covenant, the Locarno treaties and other instruments by which we may be bound*". It will be seen that Labor's proposed "Peace Act" is an Act for the Prosecution of Imperialist War.

Meanwhile the mandated consultations of the Labor Party Executive and General Council of the Trades Union Congress on the question of the general strike against war have been dragged on now for nine months without so far reaching even the pretence of a result.* The speeches of the leaders have openly denounced any such policy of the general strike against war.

But the more recent utterances of the leaders of British Laborism have gone even further.

The leader of the Labor Party, Lansbury, has now come out with an emphatic declaration against the general strike and against all strikes, under any conditions (article entitled "Strikes Will Not Win Us Power: Why I Have Changed My Views", in the *Clarion* (May 5, 1934). In this he declares:

> "All governments are bound to protect public services, and will always be forced to take this position.
>
> "A general strike in this country is now quite illegal."

He details how the previous Labor Governments organized strike-breaking, and how any future Labor Government will do the same. The significance of this pronouncement of the leader of the Labor Party, in the moment of intensifying war menace, is obvious.

Not only this, but a number of recent utterances of prominent trade union leaders have begun already to come out on the side of social-chauvinism and support of future imperialist war. Thus Bromley, Secretary of the Locomotive Engineers, and late Chairman of the Trade Union Congres, stated in a speech on May 27:

> "While generally, the British trade union movement was against international warfare, the members of the union should not commit themselves too readily to the opinion, often expressed by those who had no authority or responsibility, that the British trade union movement must prevent war by a national strike. Members must remember that at the moment a number of important nations were

* This article was written before the later decision on this question.—Ed.

not governed by political governments, but were servile states under the heel of armed dictatorship, which aimed at smashing by brutalized force the trade union movements of the world. *He conceived circumstances which might occur when it would be to the interest of British trade unionism not only not to refuse to assist but even willingly to help our country in the event of war.*"

It is sufficiently obvious that under this veiled talk of "dictatorship" in general, is covered war on the Soviet Union. Similarly, Swales, at a meeting of the Amalgamated Engineering Union National Committee, at which a resolution was put forward for strike action *in the event of a British war against the Soviet Union,* opposed this resolution and declared:

"*If there were aggressive action against this country, I do not know that we should allow the aggressors to walk over us, even though we do not believe in war.*"

In this language of prominent trade union leaders can be seen the full expression of social-chauvinist support of imperialist war, as in 1914—but this time, even before the outbreak of war. When this war-language of the British Labor leaders coincides thus with the war language of their imperialist masters, the signs are more serious than at any time since 1914 of what is preparing for the workers. On this twentieth anniversary of the first world war the call is more urgent than ever before to the entire mass of the workers to put all their strength into the organized anti-war struggle, into the struggle against the combined offensive of fascism and war, while there is yet time, in the face of the gathering war crisis which is now maturing and threatening to burst.

WHY WE WERE VICTORIOUS IN HUNGARY AND WHY WE DID NOT MAINTAIN POWER

By BELA KUN

FIFTEEN years ago, on March 21, 1919, the Proletarian revolution achieved victory in Hungary under peculiar circumstances. The peculiar feature of the establishment of the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic was that the transition of State power into the hands of the proletariat did not take place directly in the form of an armed insurrection. In his speeches and written works Lenin dealt repeatedly with the peculiar forms in which power was seized in Hungary. On March 23, 1919, at the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union he emphasized these special features, when he said that:

"We are sure that *this will be the last difficult six months.* We are specially strengthened in this belief by the information which we gave to the congress a few days ago regarding the victory of the proletarian revolution in Hungary. Seeing that the allied powers wanted to carry their troops through Hungary, seeing that the untold burden of a new war was falling on Hungary once again, the bourgeois government, the conciliatory bourgeois government, resigned, and entered into negotiations with the Communists, the Hungarian comrades who were in prison, and itself recognized that there was no alternative but to hand the power over to the toiling people."

Lenin was completely alien to the point of view adopted by Paul Levi, the then leader of the German Communists, and by many others with him, that the Hungarian proletariat should not have utilized this breakdown of the power of the bourgeoisie to take power into their hands. On the contrary, Lenin repeatedly expressed the viewpoint that the victory of the proletariat in Hungary, which assumed such special forms, meant not only the victory of Soviet power in general but also our "moral victory".

He returns to this idea again in his speech on April 3, 1919:

"This is why the Hungarian revolution, by the fact that it was born in a different way from ours, shows the whole world something that was hidden in respect to Russia, namely, that Bolshevism is linked up with a new proletarian workers' democracy which takes the place of the old parliament."

The special and peculiar features of the Hungarian proletarian revolution after its defeat in 1919 gave rise to the opinion among many people, even among Communists, that on March 21 power dropped like a ripe fruit into the hands of the Communist Party, into the hands of the proletariat, without a struggle. This view was widely spread by the Second International, especially by Austrian and German social-democracy. These social-democratic parties tried to convince the working class that the victory of the Hungarian proletarian revolution and the establishment of the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic were nothing but the purest "chance", a maneuver on the part of the Hungarian bourgeoisie to counteract the imperialism of the

Entente and a big *historic mistake on the part of Hungarian social-democracy.*

Such views can occasionally be met with in Communist circles as well. Instead of disclosing the mistakes committed by the Communist Party in the Hungarian proletarian revolution during and after the seizure of power, these comrades depict the proletarian revolution as one long mistake. Such an attitude is also exceptionally useful for slandering the heroic struggle which the Communist Party of Hungary carried on against the Hungarian bourgeoisie, against Hungarian social-democracy, against world imperialism, and for Soviet power, before March 21, 1919.

When, through Colonel Wicks, the head of the French military mission, the imperialist powers of the Entente delivered their famous ultimatum to the bourgeois democratic government, in which they demanded the surrender of the greater part of the territory of Hungary, they really drove the bourgeoisie into an impasse, and forced them to surrender their power over more than 10 million Hungarians and their control over the richest markets for their goods and the chief sources of raw material for Hungarian industry. In other words, Entente imperialism invited the Hungarian bourgeoisie to give up the greater part of their political and economic power. This ultimatum, which was backed by the Balkan army of the Entente (200-220,000 troops under General Franche d'Espre, whose staff headquarters was in Belgrade), by the military power of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, was in reality a demand that the Hungarian bourgeoisie should altogether abandon power in favor of the Rumanian, Czech and Serbian bourgeoisie.

But the power of the Hungarian bourgeoisie was threatened not only by the danger from without in the shape of the Entente ultimatum. This bourgeois power, which was shattered by military collapse, which had no considerable armed support, and which had to a great extent lost its mass basis, was faced inside the country with the opposition of the broad proletarian masses in alliance with still broader masses of peasants, under the leadership of the young Communist Party of Hungary.

The C.P. of Hungary, which we had founded on November 21, 1918, about four and a half months before the seizure of power, raised the question from the first moment of its activity, of Soviet power and the armed uprising against the bourgeois State, with a clarity and sharpness equalled by no Communist Party but the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The everyday slogans used in the agitation of the C.P. of Hungary were that the bourgeoisie be disarmed, that the proletariat be armed and that preparations should be made for the armed insurrection.

But the Party not only proclaimed the slogan, calling for the proletariat to be armed, it also organized and prepared the fulfilment of this task by its everyday work. The headquarters of the C.C. of the C.P. of Hungary, which were situated on Vishegrad Street, were not only a staff leading widespread mass work for the arming of the proletariat, but bore a strong resemblance to an armed camp. The bourgeoisie had no single military formation, no single armed organization, whether army, national guard, popular guard, etc., where the Communist Party did not have its organizations, and in many cases decisive influence as well. The Party leaders and the Party organizations took advantage of every incident to increase their stores of arms. The slogan was issued that the demobilized soldiers should not give up their arms in the barracks. The Communist Party expropriated not less than 35,000 rifles from the Mackensen army which returned from the Balkans to Germany through Hungary. It was only when imperialist intervention began against Soviet Hungary that we handed these arms over to the war commissariat. Not only did the Communist Party carry on an anti-imperialist campaign in the barracks and among the armed formations of the bourgeois democratic government. As an offset to the radical pacifist agitation of the social-democrats, one of the advocates of which, the war minister of the Karolya government, proclaimed the slogan, "I don't want to see any soldiers again", the Communist Party launched the slogan for the soldiers: "Keep your arms and use them for the struggle for the power of the proletariat". The objective of the agitational and organizational work of the Communist Party was to attract the soldiers to the side of the revolution, to win over to the revolution all the military formations of the government (with the exception of the police). The Communist Party had its agitational points everywhere, from the war ministry to the troops guarding the demarcation line, and kept contacts with the soldiers everywhere. In many cases these contacts did not have a definite organizational form, but nevertheless they showed that the Communist Party had not only agitational influence on the armed forces, but was the leader of considerable masses of soldiers at many and frequently decisive points.

Without wavering, the Communist Party decisively turned down all proposals, no matter from whence they came, to establish some intermediate form of government for the time being, instead of the immediate establishment of the Soviet Power. The leaders of the bourgeois democratic revolution besieged the Communist Party with proposals from the first day of its formation, trying by means of a compromise with the Communist Party to reach a temporary solution, a *modus vivendi,* in the struggle

with the external enemy. When through his intermediaries the president of the republic, Michael Karolya, offered the war ministry in the provisional democratic-republican government to the Communist Party, the latter sharply rejected the proposal. When two of the most prominent representatives of the Social-Democratic Party, Sigmund Kunfi and Jakob Weltner, made a proposal that we stop our "disorganizing" work, at least among the troops stationed on the demarcation line against the Rumanian and Czechoslovakian imperialists, we replied that we could only carry on negotiations with such people on one question, namely, the reconstruction of the workers' councils in such a way that they would cease to be organs for the wide representation of the Social-Democratic Party and the reformist trade unions, *i.e.*, on the question of the election of the councils on a factory basis. We wanted to carry on a struggle for the majority of the working class inside the councils, without, however, submitting the question of power to the decision even of the workers' councils. On the instructions of the C.C., the representatives of the Communist Party in the workers' councils under the leadership of Comrade Bela Vago, categorically rejected all attempts to form a so-called "labor government", a "pure social-democratic government". These attempts were made by the "Left" social-democrats, who wanted to direct the strivings of the workers towards Soviet Power into their own channels. In reply to these attempts we put forward our demands in which we demanded the immediate formation of a Soviet government.

In carrying on the struggle for Soviet Power, the Communist Party did not allow itself to be restricted by any bounds of bourgeois law. The Communist Party did not restrict its struggle for power, even when the Entente with the consent of the bourgeois democratic government and its social-democratic members brought Spahi troops from the Balkan army to Budapest. On the contrary, the Communist Party immediately developed agitation among these troops, and not without success.

From the first day of the foundation of the Communist Party and up to the taking of power, ever more frequent armed clashes took place with the organs of the bourgeois government. Beginning from December 12, 1919, when the Budapest garrison came out onto the streets in an armed demonstration against the war minister of the provisional government, (the "Left" social-democratic leaders of the council of soldiers' deputies took part in this demonstration) there was probably not a single day in which the press did not report some bloody skirmish between revolutionary workers and soldiers and the armed detachments of the government forces, especially the police. Not only in Budapest, but also in the provinces, the Communists organized mutinies and risings one after another. On December 25, 1918, the revolutionary-minded Hussars in Kechkemet occupied the barracks and disarmed the officers. On December 26 there were bloody clashes between the workers and the armed forces of the government, in which a number were killed and wounded. On December 31 bloody clashes took place again between the units under Communist influence and units loyal to the government in two of the biggest barracks in Budapest. These clashes were accompanied by armed demonstrations of the soldiers against the government and the social-democrats. In January, 1919, mass demonstrations began in Budapest under the leadership of the Communists against the bourgeois press, and the editorial offices and the publishing houses of the bourgeois papers were wrecked. At the same time in the biggest factories in Budapest and the provinces there began the forcible removal of the managers from the factories, and in many cases the seizure of the factories. In the center of the coal basin, in Shalgotorian, an armed uprising broke out, as a result of which 16 persons were killed and almost 100 wounded. Soon after this in Sarvash, in one of the agrarian centers of the province, the farm workers took part in street fights, as a result of which 10 persons were killed and over 40 wounded.

In the second half of January, 1919, armed conflicts in Budapest and in the provinces continued and became more and more frequent. In the barracks the soldiers began to offer armed resistance to the order issued by the war minister for the disarming of soldiers, chiefly the youth, who were under Communist influence. After bloody fighting, the Communists were able to retain their arms.

One after another there followed armed demonstrations of demobilized soldiers, wounded soldiers, and non-commissioned officers. The Communist Party redoubled its energy and prepared the organization of the armed forces against the bourgeois democratic government and against the monarchist counter revolution of the big landlords.

Along with the slogan of the seizure of the factories, the Communist Party launched the slogan of the seizure of dwelling houses. February saw the beginning of the seizure of big estates by agricultural workers, in many places under the leadership of the Communist organizations of the industrial centers in the province.

On February 21, the armed masses demonstrated before the premises of the C.C. and the central organ of the Social-Democratic Party. In the conflict that ensued 7 persons were killed and many injured (most of them were police and national guards). In March there began the disarming of the police and the loyal military units in many places. The government was helpless against the

organizations composed of demobilized soldiers which soon had hundreds of thousands of members, and against the organizations of the unemployed. At about the same time, at the beginning of March, the end came of the power of the employers in the factories. In the biggest of them, the orders began to be given by factory committees, and moreover these factory committees were elected and acted not on a "legal" basis but on the basis of revolutionary law.

At the same time, when the Entente demanded in the so-called Wicks Note that the Hungarian government should abandon its power over a large part of the territory of Hungary, the social-democrat Wilhelm Behm characterized the feelings of the workers on March 18, 19 and 20 almost as though he was making entries in his diary!

"March 18. In the name (but without the knowledge) of the workers of the Chepelev factory (the biggest factory in Hungary at that time, employing 40,000 workers), the factory representatives were called together, who decided that on March 28 they would liberate those Communists who had been imprisoned by armed force. The board of representatives of the Communist soldiers approved of this decision.

"March 19. The workers of Budapest held a meeting in Tattersal. From this point several thousands of people went to Burg. A delegation was sent to the social-democratic minister Julius Peidlu with the demand for the payment of 500 kron as an immediate grant and in addition special food cards by which the unemployed would receive a fifty per cent reduction at government expense. They demanded the payment of their rent by the government and the immediate socialization of the land and the means of production. The delegation was led by Communists. For hours they stood before the ministry of social support stating that they would not go until their demands were granted.

"It was only possible to scatter the masses when Peidlu promised to present the demands of the unemployed to the council of ministers for consideration. He invited a delegation to come to the offices of the council of ministers in the evening to receive a reply.

"March 20. In Budapest, the printers, who hitherto have been the most disciplined and reliable section of the workers from the socialist point of view, declared a general strike against the will of their leaders owing to discrepancies in wage-rates. The old leaders who had worked for tens of years and with whom the workers had been so satisfied, were removed. New strike leaders were elected, among whom the Communists had the decisive influence. A large section of the strikers want to forcibly prevent the appearance of the social-democratic papers. Owing to the absence of papers, the most fantastic rumors are spreading round the excited town, raising this excitement to the point of madness."

From this short extract it can be seen that not only was the Communist Party of Hungary taking a firm, unwavering and direct line for the armed insurrection, for the armed suppression and destruction of the power of the bourgeoisie, for the proletarian dictatorship, but it was actually putting this line into practice in its everyday work in the struggle for power. The Communist Party not only kept its storehouses full of arms, but used these arms in the everyday class struggle for power! The leading role of the Party, even after the arrest of the majority of the leaders on February 21, 1919, was not interrupted for a minute. For several days the members of the C.C. who had not been arrested maintained the leadership. But we soon arranged to carry on the leadership of the workers and the poor peasants from prison. This leading work was so successful that, in spite of the pogrom organized by social-democracy on February 21, when 200,000 people demonstrated against the Communists, the mass influence of the Communist Party grew day by day.

Of course, this mass influence was by no means sufficiently organized. But in the course of the four and a half months which had passed between the foundation of the Communist Party and establishment of the Soviet Power, it was impossible fully to consolidate organizationally such a gigantic and tempestuously growing mass influence, even if we had possessed numerically large and more developed Bolshevik cadres than we actually had. But thanks to the correct political and organizational line of the Party, we were able, even during this short period, to extend our political influence to the broad masses, at any rate in Budapest and in all the industrial centers in the provinces. This was due primarily to the fact that from the very first day of its existence, the C.P. of Hungary clearly realized that it would obtain influence on the working class only if it developed its agitational and organizational work first and foremost in the big factories and the trade unions. And in reality, the factory and trade union work of the C.P. of Hungary was not only shown in resolutions, but also in practical work.

The territorial organizations in the C.P. of Hungary played a very insignificant role. The main center of the agitational and organizational work was transferred to the factory organizations (they were not called cells at that time). There was never a day or any outstanding event in which the entire agitational guard of the Communist Party failed to turn up at the chief factories to call the workers to the struggle. The so-called "flying agitational detachments" penetrated even into those factories where we had no contacts whatever. For this purpose they came to the factory gates and held "im-

promptu open-air meetings" at the end of the working day. In the course of the four and a half months of a revolutionary struggle which passed between the foundation of the Party and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, there was never a single mass action carried through by the working class in which the demands brought forward were not formulated by the Communists, or which was not led by Communist groups. The Party attached the greatest importance to partial demands and partial struggles, and was able to link them up with the slogan of the struggle for power.

Beginning from the time it was founded, the C.P. tried to fix its influence deep in the trade unions. Neither the trade union bureaucrats nor the authorities succeeded in driving it from the trade unions. With the most incredible stubbornness, the Party was able to prevent the trade union bureaucrats from splitting the trade unions by expelling the Communists and revolutionary workers. The majority of the Party leaders fought mercilessly against the proposal of the minority, who, quoting the example of the Spartacists, wanted to boycott the trade unions.

In addition the mass organizations formed around the unemployed committees attached to the trade unions and the points where the unemployed gathered together, as well as in the organizations of demobilized soldiers and non-commissioned officers, served as transmission belts for mass work.

Behind the armed workers and soldiers stood the broad masses of workers and poor peasants, while the Hungarian bourgeoisie, whose only mass basis consisted almost entirely of social-democracy, found itself between two fires, namely, the cross fire of the Entente ultimatum on the one hand, and the working class struggling for power, on the other hand.

THE CO-RELATION OF CLASS FORCES IN HUNGARY ON THE EVE AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

The organization of the counter revolution was begun under the leadership of the big landlords and the bourgeoisie directly before the outbreak of the proletarian revolution; it was chiefly under anti-Communist slogans, but was also partly directed against social-democracy. As the result of the war, the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie were politically, economically and organizationally bankrupt. They had lost a large part of their social connections with those petty-bourgeois and peasant masses who formerly constituted their mass basis.

Almost all the ruling groups of the old Hungary were united in the party which was obviously the leader of the bourgeois revolution, namely, the Karolya Party, at the time when the bourgeois-democratic revolution began. These elements were chiefly groups without any orientation and without any mass following.

The danger of a Soviet government, the waverings of the Karolya government and the helplessness of the National Council which symbolized the government (being the symbol of the power of the National Council) soon caused differentiation inside the Karolya Party. One group of old politicians, Count Stefan Bethlem, Count Theodor Batayani and Martin Lovaschi, tried to form a rallying point with a view to crystallizing the counter-revolutionary forces of the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie. They wanted to bring the country as rapidly as possible to the point of calling a constituent assembly, and thus bar the path to the further development of the revolution. Some of the officers led by the present Prime Minister Julius Gembesh, joined them. They tried to take complete possession of, to monopolize so to speak, the propaganda of the slogan, spread by all the bourgeois parties and by social-democracy, namely, of the "territorial integrity of Great Hungary". The higher clergy, who were at the head of the organizations of the clerical counter revolution, also hurried to their assistance. The counter-revolutionary big landlords and the big bourgeoisie proceeded to build up mass organizations. They tried to create their own organization "Awakening Hungary", which later, after the overthrow of the proletarian dictatorship, played a big role, and which was composed mainly of employed intellectuals, students and partly of the urban petty bourgeoisie who had fled from the Entente troops in occupation.

The Communist Party promptly understood the entire significance of the counter revolution being organized by the old rulers of Hungary. Social-democracy, however, including its members who held ministerial posts and all the social-democratic leaders, tried to belittle to the masses the meaning of this counter-revolutionary movement, although it was directed not only against the Communists, but also against "excesses of democracy". Under the leadership of the Communist Party, broad masses of members of the Social-Democratic Party participated in the struggle against the counter-revolutionary organizations and made it impossible for them to carry on any mass actions in the capital and in the industrial centers.

The petty bourgeoisie were also disorganized when the bourgeois-democratic revolution broke out. The old leader of the democratic party, Wilhelm Vapsoni, had disorganized the petty bourgeoisie, even during the war, by his extremist policy of supporting the war to the bitter end, and his support of the Hapsburg dynasty. The doctrinaire and politically inexperienced group of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia,

estranged from real life, led by the minister Oster Yassi, tried to organized the urban petty bourgeoisie into a radical party. A struggle for influence over the petty bourgeoisie, and especially over the office workers and officials, began between the Karolya Party, the radicals and the social-democrats. In this struggle victory was attained in the capital by social-democracy, but in the provinces the Karolya party was the victor. The radical party broke to pieces in the process of this struggle and was compelled to dissolve itself on the eve of the victory of the proletarian dictatorship.

The Karolya party became the rallying point of the upper and middle sections of the peasants. A large section of the bureaucracy was compelled to join it, without, however, having any confidence in the Karolya party. A large section of the intelligentsia which attributed the destruction of Hungary, with its twenty million inhabitants, to Count Karolya did not support his party in practice owing to this reason alone. This distrust in this party increased still more because it did not call for determined action against the Entente. The intelligentsia did not see any force either inside or outside this party, which was in a position to defend the inviolability of Hungary against Czechoslovakia, Yogoslavia and Rumania on the one hand, and on the other hand to repulse the working class and defend capitalism.

Counter revolution placed its greatest hopes on social-democracy in the struggle against the Communist Party. The broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, the officials and even the officers, gravitated towards the Social-Democratic Party. The lower and middle ranks of the officers, police and gendarmes were organized in the Social-Democratic Party. Thus they tried to save themselves from the consequences of the rage and fury which had accumulated among the masses during the war and from the mass terror. But social-democracy was very much weakened by the fact that inside its own organizations there had broken out a struggle between revolution and counter revolution. The industrial workers, farm workers and poor peasants continued to carry on the class struggle even inside the Social-Democratic Party organizations, against the bourgeois and democratic elements which had flooded the ranks of social-democracy and on which the Social-Democratic Party relied. This circumstance greatly weakened the Social-Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucrats.

It is true that the "Left" social-democrats tried everything that was possible and impossible against the Communists. They participated in pogroms and the harrying of Communists, but in those heated times, this did a great deal to cause the social-democratic leaders to lose infleunce over the masses in view of their own internal disorganization. But they were unable to act decisively against the proletarian revolution. The leaders of the "Left" social-democrats, under the pressure of the masses, were compelled to declare that the Social-Democratic Party would dissolve the Constituent Assembly if they did not obtain a social-democratic majority in it. On the one hand this frightened the bourgeoisie, and on the other hand it put a weapon in the hands of the Communist Party for agitation against the Constituent Assembly and for the Soviet Power. The role of the "Left" social-democrats at that time was to weaken counter revolution, somewhat, though to some extent against their own will, and to hinder its effectiveness.

At that time the Hungarian bourgeoisie had not yet been able to organize international contacts for the support of their counter revolution. On an international scale social-democracy was the only hope of the Hungarian counter revolution, which was striving to preserve the territorial integrity of Hungary so as to be able to continue as hitherto its fierce oppression of the toiling masses of the national minorities, including Rumanians, Slovaks, Serbs and Horwatians. At the conference called to reconstitute the Second International, the Hungarian social-democrats had nevertheless no success in their efforts to rouse their comrades from the victorious countries "to adopt a better attitude towards democratic Hungary".

Austrian social-democracy gave extensive support to the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries not only after the victory of the proletarian revolution but also before it took place, and gave them wide rights of refuge in Vienna. But the Austrian social-democrats at that time were occupied in crushing the strivings of the working masses towards the proletarian revolution. The German bourgeoisie only saw a perfidious ally in the Hungarian bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie of the Entente were not at all inclined to be indulgent towards Count Karolya for his sympathy towards the Entente during the war, and from the very beginning refused him any support. The Hungarian bourgeoisie were carrying on a fierce struggle against the bourgeoisie of the neighboring countries (Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia).

The majority of the industrial proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party wanted to place a knife at the throat of capitalism, and tried to pass directly to socialism. The farm workers and agricultural laborers on the big estates began to divide up the estates, a deed which the Karolya government could not at all make up its mind to do. And the peasants with their tiny farms, as well as the poor and middle peasants and even a considerable part of the kulaks were hostile to the big landlords.

The apparatus of the bourgeois power was utterly disorganized and finally collapsed. In a number of provincial towns the workers removed the commissars of the Provisional Government, threw the officials onto the streets, and formed a directorate for administering the government, for the direction of the government in the locality. The national council itself ceased its spectral existence. The reorganization of the military forces on the model adopted by Austrian social-democracy, in the shape of a "trade union army", was disrupted by the mass actions and the agitation of the Communist Party. The gendarmes and other special military formations still wavered between bourgeois-landlord counter revolution and fear of the Communists, but did not represent any serious support for the government.

Such was the situation when the Hungarian bourgeoisie were brought up against the alternatives of either resigning and abandoning the power to the Entente and its hirelings, the Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian and Rumanian bourgeoisie, or of handling power over to the working class. Social-democracy, as the main social buttress of the bourgeoisie, as well as all the other parties of the bourgeoisie, were faced with the same dilemma.

The compulsory choice took place under conditions when Sigmund Kunfi, one of the most prominent and most dangerous members of the social-democratic leadership, said that "the government had in fact already ceased to exist, while the social-democrats were faced with the choice of either playing the role of Noske or of capitulating to the Communists".

But Hungarian social-democracy did not take on itself the role of Noske towards the Communist Party and the revolutionary workers, simply because in the given circumstances it had not the strength to do so. It was precisely organized armed force which they were lacking, and not the moral or political boldness needed to fulfil the role of Noske. Therefore, when the bourgeoisie were faced with the question of surrendering power, social-democracy was also forced to sign the Communist program, which had the backing not only of the newly formed Communist Party but also of the broad masses of the working class and a considerable part of the armed forces. The Communist platform was supported by force of arms, while the bourgeoisie at the same time was being squeezed also from the other side by the Entente imperialists.

The Hungarian bourgeoisie, the pillar of the conquered Mid-European imperialist group would have tried to change their orientation to the imperialism of the Entente so as to raise their heads once again. But the reply to this effort was the Wicks note, demanding the partition of Hungary, the seizure not only of the greater part of the sphere of influence of the Hungarian bourgeoisie but also the plunder of big territories really inhabited by Magyars. The Hungarian bourgeoisie tried to reply to the Wicks note by an "orientation on the East", but they were unable to carry this out as the ruling class. They had not the strength, which had been drained from them by their constrained position between the pressure of Entente imperialism and the onslaught of the proletarian revolution. The reply of the Social-Democratic Party to the Wicks note was to accept the platform of the C.P. of Hungary, which simultaneously meant the acceptance of the Soviet Power as the basis of the new government. Hungarian social-democracy carried out this turn also between two fires, namely, under the pressure of the imperialism of the Entente on the one hand, and under the pressure of the revolutionary movement of the members of its own party and trade unions who were under Communist influence, on the other.

This is the reason why the proletariat of Hungary won power without an armed insurrection, and established the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic. But although it was without an armed rising, nevertheless it was not without arms and not without armed fighting. The bourgeoisie by no means brought power to the working class as a present. They were forced to abandon power when they had no means left to carry on the struggle for retaining power.

WHY WERE WE UNABLE TO UTILIZE OUR VICTORY?

The Communist Party of Hungary did not make the most dangerous of mistakes. It did not recoil in terror at the very threshold of power. In view of the existing international and inner political situation, it would have been extremely foolish to reply to the offer of the social-democrats to adopt the program of the Communists, which made it possible to seize power, that we would wait at first until we could hurl ourselves with arms in our hands through the doors of the government which were already standing wide open. This type of reasoning, which was recommended to us by some of the leaders of the German Spartacists both before these events and afterwards, would not have helped the Hungarian proletariat to come to power and would have had no result except to compromise the Communist Party before the masses.

But at the same time the leaders of the Communist Party and I myself in the first place made a mistake in, to a considerable extent, regarding as genuine the declarations of the social-democrats who in words accepted the platform of the Communists, the proletarian dictatorship and the Soviet Power. There is no doubt that the fall of Soviet Power in

Hungary was caused not only by the subjective mistakes of the Communist Party and its leaders, but also by the relationship of forces inside the country and outside it. But it is also beyond all doubt that the relationship of class forces inside the country, and partly even on an international scale, could have been changed in favor of the Hungarian proletariat and their revolution, in favor of the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic, if we had not made the mistake of uniting with social-democracy, and as the result of this, of abandoning the independence of the Communist Party.

This circumstance deprived the proletarian dictatorship in Hungary of its organized leading vanguard. This fatal historic mistake introduced the vacillations which later in the course of the struggles were bound to take possession of the toiling masses, the leaders themselves and the very existence of the government. Lenin pointed out this mistake a year after the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary in the following striking words:

> "A number of articles in *Rote Fahne* (Vienna), the central organ of the Austrian Communist Party, have disclosed one of the chief reasons for its doom, namely the treachery of the 'socialists' who in words came over to the side of Bela Kun and declared themselves to be Communists, but in reality carried out a policy which did not correspond to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but wavered, showed timidity, ran after the bourgeoisie, often directly sabotageed the proletarian revolution and betrayed it. The world powerful bandits of imperialism who surrounded the Hungarian Soviet Republic, *i.e.*, the bourgeois governments of Great Britain, France, etc., were, of course, able to utilize these waverings in the government of Hungary and brutally crush it by the hands of the Roumanian hangmen!
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> "There is no doubt that some of the Hungarian socialists sincerely came over to the side of Bela Kun and honestly declared themselves Communists. But the essence of the matter does not change in the least: They 'honestly' declared themselves to be honest Communists. But the essence of the matter was that instead of carrying on a mercilessly firm, unswervingly determined, supremely bold and heroic policy (only such a policy corresponds to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat) they wavered and grew timid. Such a person can by his lack of character, his waverings, and his indecision carry out the same treachery as a direct traitor does."

The leaders of the C.P. of Hungary (primarily that part of them who passed through the first stage at least of the school of Bolshevism in Soviet Russia before the Party was founded) did not waver, took up the position of forming an independent Communist Party and broke with the Rights and the "Left" social-democrats. In this respect we differed even during the war from the Luxemburgians who could not understand the necessity of splitting with social-democracy and the necessity of establishing the Comintern. But when we were faced with the task of carrying out our correct views and principles in practice, in a new situation, it turned out that we were not capable of carrying out this Bolshevik policy consistently, in a Marxian and Leninist manner, in opposition to the proposal of social-democracy to unite the two parties.

The Communist Party and its leaders consisted of extremely varied elements. Some of them gladly agreed to unification with the social-democrats, just as they had opposed the formation of the Communist Party in the hope that they would "improve" social-democracy, or because they considered the formation of an independent Communist Party to be premature. Others based themselves on various "syndicalist" considerations, holding the opinion that the Communist Party would not be needed at all as soon as the unity of the proletariat was established within the bounds of the Soviets. There were also those who later condemened unification mainly on the grounds that we should not have taken power under the given circumstances. In practice, however, when we accepted the proposal of the social-democrats regarding unification, we all, and I myself above all, based ourselves in our reasoning on the incorrect, non-Marxian tactical assumption that if we could connect up with the troops of the Soviet Red Army which were already moving on Eastern Galicia (on March 18 it was announced by radio that the advance guard of the Red Army of the Soviet Republic had occupied Tarnopol), it would be possible to isolate the most unreliable of the social-democratic leaders who had not left their Party when the parties united, as the Rights did. These tactics were non-Marxian, non-Leninist, because they were built not on facts but on possibilities, which might take place and might not, as was actually the case. In any case, the fact of unification with social-democracy was an indication of the political vacillations of the Communist leaders, who were politically young, had not sufficient experience and who were not sufficiently firm theoretically and in principle. These vacillations were primarily the result of the fact that the leaders did not weigh to the end and did not understand the role of Centrism.

Our other mistakes, above all mistakes on the agrarian question, assisted in rendering the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic incapable of maintaining its power and repulsing the military forces cast against it by the Entente. However, the decisive mistake which deprived us of the power of changing the relationship of class forces in the international and internal struggle against the revolution in favor of the working class of Hungary

was that we did not utilize our victory over social-democracy, when we had won its masses away from it, and driven it to capitulate to the Communist platform and the demand for the Soviet Power. For the entire four and a half months a continuous struggle went on without stopping for a minute inside the united party, and inside the Soviet government. The leading Communists all took a share to a greater or less degree in this struggle against the social-democratic leaders. But the leaders of the extreme Left wing of social-democracy, with very few exceptions, among whom chief mention should be made of Comrade Eugene Varga, continued to carry out their previous role under the Soviet Power also. In many respects they became the chief obstacle preventing the Communists from isolating the social-democratic leaders who were not hostile and who were vacillating most. A few of them, as the memoirs of the social-democratic leaders show, took part in plots aimed at violently removing the Communists from the government. When at the time of the congress of the united party matters almost reached the point of a split between the Communists and the social-democrats, it was precisely these "Left" elements who betrayed the Communists and stood for "unity", while in reality they were on the side of the Right social-democrats. Although we did trail behind social-democracy and did not look on this "unification" as something genuine, nevertheless we Communists were under the illusion that we should be able to liquidate the waverings of the Centrists by the method of persuasion and by drawing them over to our side.

The chief source of our mistakes was our failure to understand the role of social-democracy. Above all the thing which we Hungarian Communists did not understand in the question of the historic role of social-democracy was the role of social-democracy as the leader of the democratic counter revolution in opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Social-democracy fulfilled this role in various ways during the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary as well. First of all this was expressed in the fact that the social-democratic leaders took the bourgeoisie under their protection against all the repressive measures of the proletarian dictatorship. From the Council of Peoples' Commissars and in all the other Soviet organs right down to the village Soviets, the leading social-democrats carried on their undermining work unceasingly. Moreover this counter-revolutionary work was conducted under the slogan of the "mild establishment of the dictatorship". The social-democrats opposed the firm Communist methods of carrying out the dictatorship of the proletariat, not only inside the leading Soviet organs but also publicly, stating that the expropriation of the expropriators in reality meant already the liquidation of classes.

Still more dangerous was the defeatist propaganda of the social-democratic leaders. Every day they repeated that no help had arrived from the international proletariat in the shape of victorious revolutions, in the form of government aid from the proletarian dictatorships. Some of the social-democrats, particularly Sigmund Kunfi, who later became one of the leading theoreticians of Austro-Marxism, openly agitated against a defensive war of the Hungarian Soviet Republic against the invasion of international imperialism. Kunfi reproached the Communists with wanting to fasten the role of "messiah" on to the Hungarian proletariat, since the latter were carrying on a revolutionary war not for themselves but for the liberation of the European proletariat, and moreover without any support from the proletariat of all countries. This defeatist propaganda was carried on quietly and secretly by other social-democrats as well, and not the least prominent in this matter was the commander-in-chief of the Red Army, Wilhelm Beman (who was removed later). In fact the social-democratic leaders concluded "mutual guarantee contracts" with the leaders of the bourgeois circles for mutual insurance. They, the social-democrats, used every means in their power to defend the prominent bourgeois politicians so that if the Soviet Power were overthrown, they in turn would be protected by these bourgeois politicians, bankers, landlords, and manufacturers.

When the big armed outburst of counter revolution took place on June 24, under the slogan of "national social-democracy", some of the social-democratic leaders were not at all disposed to publicly disassociate themselves from this counter-revolutionary revolt. This position of social-democracy as the leader of the democratic counter revolution was crowned after the overthrow of the Soviet dictatorship with the slogan: "the guilty must be punished". This social-democratic slogan served as the signal for setting in motion the most desperate white terror in Hungary.

And we did not perceive this role of social-democracy in all its depth during the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary. We thought that we could draw the greater part if not all of the social-democratic leaders to the side of the revolution. This was the greatest mistake, which we were unable to rectify. And this is one of the biggest but fundamental lessons to be learned from the Hungarian revolution.

Though with some delay, we set about developing the movement for the secret and illegal rallying of the old supporters of the Communist Party, and the formation of cadres for a new broad Communist

Party. In this work we were supported not only by the most influential of the old Communists but also by a number of workers' leaders who only accepted the Communist platform after March 21. These promising attempts were not successful only due to the fall of the dictatorship.

The lesson taught to the world proletariat by the struggle of the Communist Party of Hungary and the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic consists first and foremost in the estimate of the role of the Communist Party and the exposure of the historic mission of social-democracy. Lenin and the Communist International made this lesson known to the entire world proletariat. But we should also use the other lessons, especially those which were learned in the mass struggle for power.

All these lessons are preserved and utilized by the Communist Party of Hungary in its struggles. Taught by this experience and after a long, drawn out struggle, and after liquidating pernicious factional squabbles, our Party, a Party with a noble past, a fighting present and a rich future, is extending its influence wider and wider among the masses of the Hungarian proletariat, and is thrusting its roots deeper and is standing once more at the head of the Hungarian masses.

THE DE MAN PLAN IS A FRAUD ON THE WORKERS

By E. VARGA

PART II

(*Continued from last issue.*)

A PICTURE OF DE MAN'S CAPITALISM

IF DE MAN'S plan should really be put into life, the following picture would be the result:

1. *The character of the State remains unchanged.* It remains as before the State of the dominating bourgeoisie. The king remains in his place. The army, the police, the gendarmerie remain as previously under the command of the old officers. The workers and peasants remain unarmed.

2. *The means of production, as previously, remain in the possession of the capitalists.* This is persistently stressed in the plan in relation to the "*private*" sector:

> "All the branches of economy, which are not stipulated in the preceding chapters [*i.e.*, credit institutes, raw material production and the extracting industry—E.V.] constitute the private sector of economy.
>
> "*No changes will be introduced in this sector as regards the regime of ownership.*" (Italics mine—E.V.)

As regards the "nationalized sector", here also the means of production *actually* remain in the hands of capitalists, in so far as the State will only purchase sufficient shares necessary to maintain "preponderating influence" in the nationalized enterprises; furthermore, the State, which is to enjoy this influence, still remains the old class State of the bourgeoisie.

3. *The property of the ruling classes remains inviolable.* Although their agitational speeches chatter about the "expropriation of the expropriators" this is nothing but absolute bluff, and is a fraud. The plan itself persistently reiterates all along that either a voluntary sale of the shares will take place or they will be "expropriated" in the bourgeois sense of this word, *i.e.*, the selling price of the shares will be fixed by a government commission.

The article by de Man (*Peuple* of March 21, 1934) stated as follows:

> "I even had to point out that in order to ensure that the plan is successfully carried out, it would be important that the expenses incurred by the transfer of the property be limited by a certain minimum required for the authority of the controlled economy. From this point of view the best solution of the question would be such as would enable the Ministry of Finance and the Credit Institute to put into operation the 'preponderating influence' stipulated by the plan, even without buying up the shares, and moreover without expropriating the shareholders."

That is to say, not only is the property of big capitalists to remain inviolable, *but in all probability, they would be able to do excellent business in connection with the purchase of their shares by the government.*

Let us try to visualize this purchase of shares concretely. If Mr. Capitalist does not succeed in obtaining the price he wants on the basis of a voluntary agreement, (*gre a gre*), the selling price is to be fixed by a government commission. But who is to compose this commission? Not the mill and factory workers, but high State officials, and lawyers, and maybe some isolated representative of the

trade unions. In a word, in the majority of cases it will be the people of the same ilk, who, by their class position, their bringing-up and their "connections", are wholly and completely on the side of the bourgeoisie. (We do not stress *direct bribery* although in practice this method would certainly play a not unimportant role.) And as is always the case when a transaction is made between the big capitalist and the bourgeois State, it is always the capitalist who gets the best of it.

What sums are involved may be seen from the example of the Belgian coal industry, the largest of all those which are to be nationalized:

DATA ON THE BELGIAN COAL INDUSTRY.*

Years	Income in Millions of grants ("benefices")	Income of Nominal capital %	Shares quotations in the coal mines in July
1928	193	11.3	157
1929	162	10.3	187
1930	346	14.6	116
1931	118	6.2	94
1932	6	3.2	51

As we see from the above, the income of the Belgian coal industry dropped down considerably despite the heavy wage cuts, which we shall deal with later, due to the crisis, to the competition of English and German coal, and to the big strike of coal miners in Borinage. Share quotations dropped accordingly.

At the end of December 1932** the total capital invested in the Belgian coal industry amounted to 2,514 million francs.

This amount includes 692 million francs' worth of bonds which pay a fixed interest, as well as 1,882 million francs' worth of shares.

In order to attain "preponderating influence" the State would have to buy, in round figures, 900 million francs' worth of shares.

Thus the Commission would be confronted with the question of whether the shares are to be bought at the share quotation of 187, 116 or 51. If the government were to purchase the share at 51, it would have to pay out the sum of 459 million francs to the mine owners, whereas if it should buy at 187, the State would pay out to the mine owners the sum of 1,683 million francs for 900 millions' worth of nominal share capital. *Every additional per cent on the share quotations would mean another nine millions for the capitalists!*

It is easy to imagine that the capitalists would mobilize all their scientists and economists to prove that the shares must be bought at 187 and not at 51; and that every member of the government commission would receive huge bribes worth millions providing he was willing to meet the desires of the coal barons when fixing the purchase price! How many officials could you find who would withstand such gifts, which exceed the salaries they could earn for their entire official career?

This refers just as much to the banks and to all other enterprises, whose shares are to be bought out by the government, as to the coal mines. And who would defend the interests of the State against such pressure from the capitalists? Probably Mr. de Man, the future "Commissar of Finance", the permanent, highly paid contributor to the journal of the National Bank, which in its turn is linked up to the coal magnates through thousands of threads? Or, maybe, the leaders of the Belgian co-operatives which are working on purely capitalist principles?* Or, perhaps the leaders of the Labor Bank, which has a strong interest in the capitalist exploitation of the Congo, and which accepted a subsidy last year in the shape of a credit of 82 million francs from the National Association of Industry and Trade, and which only recently attempted to avoid bankruptcy through a large government grant.

It is obvious that nationalization in such circumstances, *i.e.*, the participation of the State in capitalist enterprises, would by no means imply the expropriation of the capitalists, but on the contrary would be a splendid deal as far as they would be concerned.

And such has always been the case when any bourgeois State has bought up the shares of a private company. It is only a *revolutionary* State, only the armed power of the workers and peasants, that will scatter the old State apparatus, and replace it by Soviets of the toilers, which will chase the old officials out and expropriate the big capitalist enterprises without compensation, only such a State is really able to operate nationalization in the interests of the toiling population. But the scheme mapped out by de Man and by the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party will, in the event of its realization, *be nothing but "nationalization" in the interests of the big bourgeoisie!*

4. *The distribution of incomes remains unchanged.* One and the same idea occurs quite often

* All data are taken from the *Economic Position of Belgium in* 1932.

** *Ibid.*, see page 267.

* In one of his pre-war pamphlets de Man wrote: "The cooperative weaving factory in Ghent financed by the Foornyt was recently turned into a joint stock company. . . . Since the enterprise still belongs to the Party, and the possession of even one share in it makes its owner a member of the Party, *it is now possible to be promoted to membership of the Party on the stock exchange* by merely buying one share of this capitalist enterprise." (*The Labor Movement in Belgium*, p. 20.)

in all the articles and speeches which popularize the plan of de Man, *viz.*, any attempt to change the distribution of incomes for the benefit of the workers by means of strike struggle is absolutely devoid of all prospects of success in the period of the crisis. This is the reason why it is necessary to "fight" for the change of the "structure of capitalism" in the spirit of the proposed plan.

What is the logic of this course of thinking from the point of view of the workers? What benefit does the worker derive, what affair at all is it of his, as to how the shares are distributed among the various capitalists, the Societe Generale and the bourgeois? Under the capitalist system what the worker is interested in is only the wages he receives for his hard work! It is *not* the "structure of economy" that interests him, and as long as the means of production and the commodities produced by his labor belong to his class enemy, to the exploiters, it is precisely in the distribution alone of the product of his labor between himself—the worker—and the capitalist, that interests him. The worker is entitled to demand from the execution of the "Great Plan" at least an actual improvement in his conditions, an increase in his wages.

In all the countless articles and speeches about the plan we would seek in vain for a clear and explicit promise to the effect that a 10 *or* 20 *per cent increase in wage rates will take place in the "nationalized branches of industry".* We find plenty of general, handsome and high-sounding words, but nowhere do we find any clear promise that the *wage cuts,* which, for example, were carried out in the coal industry during the crisis, will be abolished simultaneously with the "nationalization" of the coal industry. Yet this question is by far more important for the Belgian workers than all the eloquent but inconcrete palaver about the "expansion of the home market" the "growth of economic prosperity", and about "living down the crisis".

For even before the crisis, the conditions of the workers in Belgium were worse than in any of the neighboring countries. As a proof we shall cite the indices of the Geneva Bureau of Labor which were certainly made out without premeditation:

The comparative index of real wages in different cities, computed on the basis of the value of necessities of life * (London, July 1924=100%).

	January 1928	January 1929
Berlin	68	77
Brussels	47	52
London	103	106
Paris	61	59
Philadelphia	194	296

* *Revue Internationale de Travail,* April 1929, p 198.

Of course it is only an approximate computation, but nevertheless it shows, if even roughly, in an approximate fashion, that the Belgian workers could buy for their earnings only one-fourth of the products which American workers could with theirs, about half of what the English workers could buy, about 30 per cent less than the German workers and 15 to 20 per cent less then the French workers.

During the crisis, Belgian capital has continued to ruthlessly cut down wages. Below are the figures given by the International Labor Bureau:

Usual or Minimum of Pay per Hour (in Francs) For Adult Workers

June	Engineers		Building Industry		W'd-working Industry	
	Metal Turner	Unskilled Workers	Car. p'nter	Masons l'b'rer	Joiner	Polisher
1930	6.25-7.50	4.50-4.75	7.50	5.75-6	7.05	7.25
1931	5.89-6.90	4.20-4.45	6.75	4.75	6.75	6.75
1932	5.40-6.45	3.70-4.20	6.00	4.25	6.30	6.30
1933	5.40-6.45	3.90-4.20	5.50	4.00	5.85	5.85

The wage cut during the crisis amounts to 15 to 33 per cent.*

But maybe the International Labor Bureau is not a reliable source? We will cite an extract from an absolutely capitalist source, namely, the "Annual Report of the National Bank of Belgium", about wage cuts in the coal industry:

> "When the crisis set in, the coal enterprises had to limit themselves in the beginning to only a part of this cut. On July 6, 1930, they restored the 6 per cent increase over and above the one stipulated in the agreement. On August 4, 1929, as well as on October 5, 1930, they again cut wages by 4 per cent as against October 20, 1928. By June 11, 1931, the wage cuts made under the agreements, which were repeated five times, reached 25 per cent. In order to see how these cuts affected the mining population we must add to this another 10 per cent cut. . . . The last 5 per cent cut under the agreement took place on June 19, 1932."**

If we add all the cuts in the wages of miners enumerated here we will receive *total cuts of* 40 *per cent during the period of the crisis.* The *official* index of the cost of living has dropped for the period from 1929 to 1933, from 220 to 182 (if the cost of living in 1931 be taken as 100 per cent) or a decrease of 17 per cent. Thus, *even according to the computation of the capitalists themselves,* the miners who are employed for a full working week, can buy for their earnings 28 per cent less bread,

* *Revue Internationale de Travail,* October 1933.

** *Information Bulletin* of the National Bank of Belgium, April 26, 1933, p. 265.

meat, footwear and clothes, than they could four years ago! The position is still more complicated by the very acute unemployment existing among the coal miners.*

In order that the "nationalization" of the coal industry should bring anything at all to the coal miners, the least that is required is the abolition of these wage cuts suffered by the miners during the crisis. But we would look in vain for even a word in the plan and in the articles on the plan, which would introduce any clarity into the question of wages.

The famous nationalization will only result in the mining magnates disposing of part of the shares to the government at a high price, thus doing a brilliant and profitable stroke of business.

The very fact that both de Man and those who support his plan invariably stress that it is merely "a change of structure" that is provided by the plan, and not an alteration in the distribution of incomes, shows clearly that this famous nationalization will bring no change in the present distribution of incomes, which ensures tremendous profits for a handful of capitalists, while dooming the workers to eternal privation and destitution.

The distribution of the national income under which the whole broad mass of the workers is chronically on the brink of starvation, while several hundreds of people receive yearly incomes ranging from one to over 10 million francs, is to remain unchanged, after de Man's plan is put into life as well!

With regard to the *private* sector, which is to compose the overwhelming part of the Belgian economy, the plan persistently stresses that:

> "In all the branches of industry organized on a capitalist basis, but which do not belong to the category of credit monopolies, electrical industry, or the production of raw materials, as provided for in the preceding chapter, the existing system of free competition, rid of all bonds of political capitalism, will be maintained.
>
> "In this sector, free competition should be allowed to give everything it can give in the sense of developing initiative and of the inventive spirit in the search of increased productivity of labor and profitability."

The most essential are the *last* words, and they mean that every capitalist in the private sector, *i.e.*, in nine-tenths of Belgian industry, may, as hitherto, set all the means of free competition going so long as he attains an "*increase of income*, an increase of profitability"! In other words: After the plan is put into operation, all the employers in the textile, engineering and chemical industries, etc., can, unhindered by the government, strive "to increase the productivity" by speed-up, in order to squeeze out of the workers even more work than hitherto. Without any interference on the part of the State, the capitalists can continue to cut down the wages of their workers for the purpose of achieving "a growth of income". As for the State, it will, being a respectable bourgeois State, preserve "neutrality" as heretofore, in the struggle between capital and labor, without interfering in the play of the forces of free competition, until the "vital interests of society" become jeopardized!

But if in the process of a big strike, danger threatens the supplies of the cities, transport facilities, or the defense of the country, then the future socialist prime minister, or the minister of Belgian national economy, will mobilize strikebreakers protected by armed forces, in the very same way as has been done by the Belgian bourgeois ministers, by MacDonald in England, or Severing in Germany! A bourgeois State must act in the interests of the capitalists and against the workers, even if socialists occupy the ministerial chairs. The entire historical experience of the post-war period is proof of this. A State can be dominated *either by the bourgeoisie or by the proletariat!* If, however, the bourgeoisie continues to own the means of production and preserves its property and income, while remaining the ruling class as before, the State remains *its* State, a bourgeois State, which *must* oppress the workers, *even if* "socialists" are at the head of the government.

Thus we may state that in the "private" sector, *the distribution of income, as well as everything in general, remains as of old,* although the plan states, as though in self justification, that:

> "Nevertheless this private economy will be controlled economy, insofar as it will be subordinated to the same conditions as the nationalized sector, to the general directives, provided for in chapter VI."

But this is nothing but empty blather without any concrete content, as we shall prove further on.

But the plan will not bring any harm either to the property or to the income of those capitalists whose enterprises belong to the nationalized sector. Part of their shares will be purchased by the State at a handsome price. They will be able to invest the money they receive for their shares in the "private sector" without any restrictions whatsoever, they will be able to buy government bonds, or invest this money in foreign enterprises operating in Belgium,

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* In 1927 175,544 workers were employed in the Belgian coal industry, while in 1932 their number amounted to only 130,143. The crisis deprived over 45,000 miners of employment! Every fourth worker in the coal mining industry is unemployed.

or in the Belgian enterprises operating abroad,* or use it for the profitable exploitation of Negroes in the Belgian Congo, after the example of the Belgian socialist co-operators. The capitalists will not become any poorer even by a penny as a result of this "nationalization"; neither their property nor their income will be decreased by a centime. They will rather become even richer!

5. In so far as the entire economy of Belgium will remain capitalist, and free competition will continue its sway in nine-tenths of it, in so far as over 50 per cent of Belgian commodity production is exported, necessarily competing on the world market against the goods produced by other capitalist countries, and in so far as 50 per cent of goods consumed are imported from abroad, *the anarchy* of capitalist production will remain unchanged. This means a chronic general crisis, periodic economic crises, and mass unemployment.

It is true that in his speech at the Congress, de Man promised nothing more nor less than the establishment of crisisless capitalism:

> "The object", said he, "is to create such an economic regime as will destroy the causes of the crisis and, first and foremost, underconsumption."

But this is either nonsense, or deliberate demagogy. Capitalism, which is based wholly or partly on free competition, or which is either entirely private or bears the mark of State capitalism, inevitably results in periodically returning crises. This has been theoretically proved in Marx's teaching, proved in practice by the whole history of capitalism in all the countries of the world. If the "nationalization" of credit and of the extracting industries, as well as of the industries producing raw materials, is carried out within the framework of the bourgeois State, it will not change this position by an iota. And "underconsumption" will not cease, since the working class will as hitherto continue to receive only part of the products of its labor in the form of wages, whereas the remaining part will be used by capitalists as surplus value for this multiplication of their capitals. Capitalism is unthinkable without "underconsumption", without the income of the workers being reduced to a minimum!

We can now summarize the above.

The fulfillment of the plan would not change the economic and social conditions in Belgium.

In particular:

The State would remain, as hitherto, the *old bourgeois State,* which, in the struggle between capital and labor, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, inevitably and invariably defends the interests of the bourgeoisie against the interests of the proletariat.

The means of production would, as hitherto, remain in the possession of the bourgeoisie.

The distribution of income would remain unchanged: The workers would, as of old, receive only just enough so as not to die of starvation; while the big capitalists would still continue to put millions in their pockets every year.

The mode of production would continue to remain capitalist with periodical overproduction, with permanent "underconsumption" on the part of the toiling masses, with crises and mass unemployment, and with all these well-known scourges of the capitalist mode of production, which overwhelm the proletariat.

Such is a true picture of Belgian economy in the event of de Man's plan being put into life.

In whose interests must economy be "managed"?

Like de Man in the above quotation, the advocates of the plan would probably reply: it is not important just what, and how much will be nationalized; what counts is that economy will no longer be "managed" in the interests of monopolist capital, but in the interests of the workers.

But the entire experience of the post-war period, all the socialist governments in Germany, England, Austria, and of the Scandinavian countries show that it is absolutely impossible in a bourgeois State to carry out with the aid of the apparatus of the bourgeois State a policy which is in the interests of the workers and against the interests of the big bourgeoisie, even if the social-democratic ministers are guided by the best possible motives, which by the way, is an absolutely unreal assumption as regards the ministers, who have merged with the bourgeois State.

As regards de Man's plan, it is not difficult to prove that the policy foreseen by him is in actual fact not directed against the big bourgeoisie, unless in some places it is so stated *in words.* On the contrary, the workers are promised very little and even that is in a vague form, but a great deal is given to the capitalists, and in quite definite form, too.

Well, what does the plan promise the workers?

> "A policy of labor which strives for the reduction of the working day and the regulation of wages by the introduction of a legalized system of labor agreements, the recognition of the trade unions, arbitration commissions, collective agreements, minimum wages."

The above lines make clear to everybody that the *plan promises no increase in wages,* but merely the

* The plan reads: "The regime of foreign capital investments in Belgium and of Belgian capital investments abroad will be subordinated to the same principles [as the private sector], namely, freedom of circulation, restricted by the requirements and needs of national prosperity, etc."

"regulation" of wages, and the establishment of a minimum wage! This means, obviously, that the present unheard-of low wages will be considered as "standards", and fixed as minimum wages! If it were otherwise, then the plan would simply have read: wage increases! But we would search in vain for these decisive words which are of such importance to the proletariat. But in the bourgeois State, the minimum wage rate always has a tendency to become the *maximum* rate, as is most glaringly proved by the example of the United States of America, where Roosevelt, who is by no means socialistically inclined, has also introduced the general minimum wage rate.

But some hope of improvement must still be given to the workers, otherwise they will not declare for the plan. This is the reason why the following highly obscure clause has been inserted in the plan:

> "The monetary policy, which while preserving all the advantages and benefits which Belgium secures from the importance of its gold fund and the stability of its currency, will allow of an *increase in the purchasing power of the various categories of the incomes of the toilers.*"

What on earth does this mean? How can a "monetary policy" achieve an increase in the "purchasing power" of wages while preserving the stability of the currency, without increasing the rate of wages concerned? Does it mean that the prices will be reduced by an artificial contraction of money circulation? *But the Belgian bourgeoisie will never allow this.* Why, the bourgeoisie of all countries have made the struggle against the sharp drop in prices during the crisis the principal object of their care. It is precisely on this account that all the capitalist countries resorted to inflation, in order to screw up prices, and this refers to the United States of America, and England, to Japan and the Scandinavian countries, and so forth. How. then, could a *bourgeois* government in Belgium, even if it had a majority of "socialists", be able to promote an oppositive policy? If things should go so far as such an attempt, the bourgeoisie would transfer a considerable amount of its capital to foreign countries (as we have seen above, the plan persistently stresses the freedom of the international circulation of capital) and Belgium's balance of payments would become adverse and inflation would become inevitable. An increase in the purchasing power of wages by means of "monetary" policy is not practicable. De Man himself writes in his different articles about the necessity of "increasing money circulation", *i.e.*, inflation.

In conclusion we find in the plan a very conditional promise to introduce universal social insurance. This clause of the plan reads:

> "The tax policy, which will utilize part of these super-budget receipts for the organization of a multiform system of social insurance on the basis of sufficient payments made by the insured and their employers, and will increase that part of the national income which is spent directly on consumption [!]."

The meaning of this clause is as follows: if the anticipated economic improvement results in a budget surplus, a system of social insurance is to be organized. But just when this is to happen, in the conditions of a protracted crisis, is absolutely undefined.

But it would be absolutely wrong to simply allege that social insurance would mean an increase on the part of the national income directly expended for consumption.

Let us analyze this question.

If half of the insurance expenses are paid by the workers and half by the employers, then it is quite clear that as regards half the benefits received, we receive nothing but a shifting of means, without any increase in purchasing power. As regards the other half, the payments made by the employers, these of course could help in a growth of consumption on the part of the working class, but under one condition only, namely, if the employers do not strive to shift their payments to the social insurance fund on to the shoulders of the workers, in the form of wage cuts! This, however, can be achieved neither by government decisions nor by a plan, but by the economic struggles of the working class!

Taking into consideration the will of the workers, as well as the desires of considerable strata of the bourgeoisie who would like to sell their merchandise to the Soviet Union, the plan graciously promises "recognition" of the U.S.S.R. After the Soviet Union has been recognized by all the great powers, Belgium is at last also allowed to take this step, at least in the plan!

The blessings promised to the bourgeoisie by the plan are much more concrete and clear.

a. *Security of profits.*

> "A policy of prices, which organizes the prohibition of monopolist extortions and speculation with merchandise, and which *strives to stabilize the profits in agriculture, industry and trade.*"

In this clause the essential words are italicized, namely the security of profits for private capital, by means of a government price policy. So as not to repel immediately the workers the matter is represented as if the security of the capitalists' profits will take place at the expense of the monopolists, and not at the expense of the workers. But this is the sheerest demagogy, for the source of profits for capital is the exploitation of the pro-

letariat. Once the security for the capitalists' profits is set up as the object of economic policy, then it means the preservation of the present degree of the exploitation of the Belgian proletariat and nothing more!

b. *Reduction of taxes for the bourgeoisie.*

> "A tax policy which will mainly reduce such taxes as constitute a direct burden on industry and trade, at the expense of super-budget receipts resulting from the increase of economic activity."

The bourgeoisie are to get security of profits and reduction of taxes; whereas the proletariat are to receive no wage increases, but some vague promises for some remote future! Such in essence is the content of the planned "leadership" of economy.*

The workers who are acquainted with the plan only from the smooth and pretty articles in the *Peuple,* and from the speeches of the leaders made at meetings, will probably be astonished at our conclusions! Is there anything they have not been promised in the event of the Belgian Labor Party coming to power and putting the plan into life? They are to achieve the termination of the crisis, a new improvement, the elimination of crises in general, the liquidation of unemployment forevermore, the reduction of the price of necessities, wage increases, the expropriation of the capitalists and the peaceful realization of socialism. But not a word of all this is to be found in the plan itself.

To illustrate how the leaders of the Labor Party of Belgium interpret the gist of the plan to the workers we will quote several extracts from speeches.

In de Man's speech at the council of the Belgian Labor Party, the object of the plan is outlined as:

> ". . . The socialization of the large-scale industry . . . as the ultimate establishment of an economic system based on the needs of the consumers, and not on the profits of a minority."

How lovely it sounds! But an analysis of the text of the plan shows that Belgian economy will still remain capitalist even after the plan is operated, and will therefore in the future also be based "on the profits of the minority", and not "on the needs of the consumers".

In the same speech de Man points out that the operation of his plan "would ensure the population a serious improvement of its standard of living". This platitude, which contains an extremely vague promise, is included in the plan itself, the economic section of which ends in the following way:

> "The Bureau of social investigation will study the possibilities of realizing these tasks within the framework of a Five-Year Plan, which will permit an increase of the consuming power on the home market by at least 50 per cent in three years and by 100 per cent by the end of the fifth year."

This is the most brazen and shameless demagogic plagiarism on the Five-Year Plan of the U.S.S.R. We ask any worker with enough common sense, how it is possible to increase home consumption by 100 per cent once the workers' wage rates are, as stated above, not increased but are merely brought to a "norm" on the basis of the present standard.

At the congress of the Belgian Labor Party, Bertens, the Secretary of the reformist trade unions, declared that:

> "De Man's plan not only strives to eliminate unemployment, but even to find work for young people after they leave school.
>
> "By means of this labor plan we are striving to eliminate the material and moral destitution oppressing our youth."

An analysis of the plan shows that its realization would not reduce chronic unemployment by one iota.

We could quote here an endless number of similar extracts. But these examples are quite sufficient to show how remote is this interpretation of the plan which is intended to deceive the workers, from the concrete, real content of the plan as intended for the bourgeoisie.

From whence do we get this disparity between the literal text of the plan and the speeches and articles about the plan?

The explanation is the following:

The plan is in itself an important document; it is the *political platform of a possible future coalition government comprising the Belgian Labor Party and one or several bourgeois groupings.* This is the reason why everything in the plan must be formulated in such a way as to make it acceptable for the bourgeoisie, as the platform of the future coalition government. Everything on the other hand, that the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party in their articles and speeches put before the workers or that they promise the latter—is their own private affair! The Belgian bourgeoisie understands quite well that the more the working class trusts in this plan as a peaceful way out of the crisis, as "a transition path to socialism", the less will it be susceptible to Communist ideas, the less will be the number of workers to pass from the Belgian Labor Party to the Communist Party of Belgium, and the more seldom will the working class resort to revolutionary means of struggle. On this point the interests of the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party and of the Belgian bourgeoisie absolutely coincide. This is the reason why

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* The whole plan, by the way, contains not a word about the Belgian peasantry who are pining away under the burden of the agrarian crisis. What help will the peasants receive in the future "regulated society"?

the Belgian bourgeoisie does not in the least object to the interpretation of the plan made by the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party who adorn it with sonorous revolutionary phrases.

This character of the plan, as a platform for a possible future coalition government, has its counterpart also in its position on two decisive and most important points, namely, regarding the colonies, and the question of war.

The terrible exploitation of the natives in the Belgian Congo is universally known. But it would be futile to spend any efforts in attempting to find in the plan at least such hypocritical reforms as the Second International from time immemorial usually puts forward allegedly in the interests of the colonial population. Not a word is said in the plan about the fate of the nine million Negroes in the Belgian Congo. There is only one laconic sentence, which is, however, of the highest importance for the Belgian bourgeoisie, about the "complete inclusion of the Congo into the new system of national economy". The colonial super-profits of the Belgian bourgeoisie must remain intact. There is not a word to be found in the plan *about war,* but in de Man's speech at the congress, the bourgeoisie are promised that in the event of a coalition government coming to power on the platform of the plan, the Belgian Labor Party will mobilize the Belgian workers to serve the interests of Belgian imperialism:

> "The problem of national defense cannot be the same in a monopolist State, as it is in a State which has a form which is transitory to socialism."

That is to say, in the new "State of the transition period" the workers must defend the interests of the bourgeoisie with greater patriotism, and shed their blood in the approaching new world war with greater readiness, than during the first war.*

The workers who today still regard the plan merely as a means for establishing socialism, should ask themselves the following question: If the realization of the plan would really make a breach in capitalism, and would be a transitory step to socialism, why, then, does the bourgeoisie not mobilize all their forces against the plan? Why is it that we do not see the bourgeoisie giving any sharp rebuff to the plan, but on the contrary, we find that what predominates is a favorable attitude on the part of the bourgeoisie to the plan? Here are a few examples:

Delsin writes in the *Peuple* of December 1, 1933:

> "It has been recently reported that the plan of our friend de Man has met with a certain sympathy . . . in financial circles and in heavy industrial circles."

In the editorial of the *Peuple* of March 15, 1934, A. Devigne gives the following news:

> "The correspondent of *Niue Courant* is constrained to admit, that the 'plan' is quite acceptable to all those who sympathize with Catholics and who take in earnest the encyclical of the Pope."

We could, if we wanted, multiply without end examples of such bourgeois approval of de Man's plan.

THE PLAN IS A CLEARLY DEVELOPED ANTI-COMMUNIST MANEUVER

But the genuine object of the agitation raised around the plan is by no means the desire to put it into operation (although it is with the greatest pleasure that the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party would be prepared to come to power with the aid of this plan); in essence, the object may be reduced to the desire to intercept the growing discontent of the workers, and to arrest the radicalization of the masses. An "active campaign" for the carrying out of the plan is meant to keep the workers back from passing to the revolutionary path under the influence of the Communist Party. This follows absolutely clearly from all the utterances of the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party. As for the very idea of a *genuine proletarian revolution,* it is a scarecrow to the leaders of the B.L.P., who are linked up indissolubly with the bourgeoisie through the Labor Bank, through the large-scale co-operative enterprises, through their ministerial past and in the hope for ministerial portfolios in the future.

"The plan itself is nothing, it is the action in its favor that is everything"— openly declared de Man in his speech at the Congress.*

Fear of the radicalization of the masses, and particularly of the unemployed, and dread of Communists run like a red thread through all the speeches and articles of de Man and his ilk:

> "We are threatened with the danger of seeing how a social stratum wil form in the bowels of the organized working class, whose interest will differ from those of the toilers, who are still fortunate enough to be regularly employed.

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* "We must tell ourselves firmly, that we are in favor of national defense, and for an even more effective one, than proposed to us by our rulers." (*Peuple,* December 20, 1933.)

* The following excerpt from de Man's speech at the congress shows how little importance the leaders of the B.L.P. attach to the urgent carrying out of the plan:

> "It is imperative to make extensive investigations. Twenty-two special commissions are busy working out the principal items of the plan."

"The Communists are few, but among them are active elements, capable of doing much harm. . . ."

The political meaning and object of the plan is to raise a dam against the dissemination of "dangerous" ideas among the working class, in order to gain time, until, as they hope, the economic crisis passes and normal times return, and the *revolutionary fermentation among the working class wanes.* The development of the plan, and the concentration of the proletariat's attention on the plan serve this object.

We must admit that the maneuver has been executed with great cunning.

On the basis of the experience of the post-war period, the proletariat have found out that the participation of the social-democratic leaders in a bourgeois government has never led to any construction of socialism, but, in the long run, has led to fascism.

The leaders of the B.L.P. answer the workers as follows: Yes, that's true. But the cause of the failure lies not in the impossibility of a peaceful and gradual transition to socialism by means of participating in the government; the cause, they say, lies in the fact that the social-democrats took the power or participated in the government *without any firm plan.* But by linking participation in the government with the acceptance of the plan as a government program, we, they add, thus ensure the "reorganization of the structure of economy", "the building up of socialism". But the workers, of course, have not to know that the plan will not change the existing situation, even if it is put into operation.

Our *slogan of the united front* in the struggle against the bourgeoisie troubles the leaders of the B.L.P. very much. Hitherto they have been unable to oppose it with anything. But they have now invented a means, namely the *"labor front"*, in place of the *"united front"*.

"A Workers' labor front must be created," writes de Man, "in these conditions [if the entire attention is concentrated on the plan—*E.V.*], I think the question of the united front will be liquidated of itself." (De Man's speech at the Congress.)

In the hullaballoo raised around the plan the struggle against the united front is the leading motive. But the Belgian workers will not catch the bait of the "Labor Front". A fine "labor front" this is, in which Catholic bishops, capitalist exploiters, and all the enemies of the proletariat participate. If the capitalists and their banner-bearers shout that they are getting ready to "fight" for the cause of the workers, they must only have one aim in view, namely, to sabotage and betray the struggle of the working class. The workers and the poor peasants must be in one united front; while the capitalists, bishops and all kinds of professors and bank directors, even if they do belong to the B.L.P., belong to the enemy front. As long as the working class not only tolerates its class enemies in its party, but even grants them leading posts in this party, it cannot win. It is only in Russia that the proletariat was able to gain power, because it purged the ranks of its Bolshevik Party ruthlessly and in good time of all traitors, of all its class enemies. The toiling masses of the whole world, Belgium included, see in the U.S.S.R. their model, and an example for themselves. The leaders of the B.L.P., and de Man himself in particular, are trying to intercept these moods in their favor. For the sake of appearances, de Man's plan claims a certain similarity with the Five-Year Plan of the Soviets; it provides for the establishment of "commissariats" and of a "Council of National Economy", just as in the U.S.S.R. There is talk of a "Five-Year Plan", just as exists in the Soviet Union. De Man had even the impertinence to make a comparison in his speech at the Congress between the "mixed economy" mapped out by him, and the economic system prevailing in the U.S.S.R.

"What objections can they [the Communists] find against our plan? That a mixed economy is being planned? We can reply, that in creating a mixed economy, we, *in Belgium, are starting at the point where they have finished off in Russia.*" (Emphasis mine—E.V.)

"The great scholar", de Man, evidently thinks that the Belgian workers are fools, if he imagines that they will be caught in a trap of such a brazen bluff.

Was the property of the Tsar, and of the big landowners and capitalists in Russia confiscated without any compensation? *Yes!*

And in Belgium, is it proposed to confiscate the property of even a single capitalist without compensation? *No!*

Is there even a single capitalist enterprise left in the Soviet Union? *No!* (Foreign concessions have also been liquidated.)

And according to the plan, is not private capitalism to be preserved in Belgium to the extent of nine-tenths? *Yes!*

Has the land in the Soviet Union been nationalized and handed over to the toiling rural population for gratuitous exploitation? *Yes!*

And in Belgium, is it proposed to nationalize the land, will land rent and land bondage be liquidated? *No!*

Were tenement houses in the cities of the U.S.S.R. expropriated without payment, and handed over into the possession of the city Soviets? *Yes!*

And in Belgium, will the house property of the capitalists in the cities, and thus housing speculation, be affected under the plan? *No!*

Have the old State apparatus, the old army, the gendarmerie and the police been dispersed in the Soviet Union and substituted by a new apparatus, consisting of the workers and peasants? *Yes!*

And does de Man project at least some changes in the State apparatus, in the army and the police? *No!*

Is it true that in the Soviet Union all former landowners and capitalists (in so far as they have not escaped abroad), the kulaks, and all the enemies of the proletariat, have been disarmed, while the proletariat has been armed? *Yes!*

But do the leaders of the B.L.P. contemplate the arming of the proletariat, and the disarming of the bourgeoisie and of its class army? *No!*

To place the "mixed economy" planned by de Man alongside of the economy of the Soviet Union is the most brazen fraud imaginable!

All this clearly shows the true meaning of the hullaballoo around the plan, namely, to distract the workers from the struggle to raise their wages, to arrest the radicalization of the masses, to smash the united front movement of struggle, to prevent the flow of the workers from the B.L.P. to the Communist Party of Belgium, and to somehow live through the crisis period which is so dangerous for capitalism and for the B.L.P.! "The Labor Plan of work" is a plan to defend capitalism in Belgium!

DE MAN'S PLAN CLEARS THE WAY FOR FASCISM

Although the plan speaks about "strengthening the foundations of democracy", nevertheless the proposed "political reform" actually means the transfer of the most important functions of the parliament to "commissariats" which are to be established, the strengthening of the bureaucratic apparatus at the expense of parliament exactly in the spirit of fascism. The concluding clauses of the plan read:

> "5. This chamber, whose methods of work must be simplified and adapted to the needs of the modern social organization, will avail itself, when working out laws, of the assistance of consultative councils, *whose members will partly be drawn in from outside parliament on the basis of their recognized competence in the given questions.* (Emphasis mine—E.V.)
>
> "6. To avoid the danger of fascism, parliament grants to the organs which are entrusted with the management of economy a special warrant necessary for rapid action and for the concentration of the entire responsibility."

Clause 5 means that in the future the elaboration of laws will constitute the task not of parliament alone, but also of extra-parliamentary councils consisting of "people with recognized competence", *i.e.*, of prominent capitalists, bourgeois scholars, and loyal "specialists" from the upper strata of the Belgian Labor Party, the co-operatives, the bankir bosses, and T.U. bureaucrats.

Clause 6 implies that the new bureaucratic a paratus will receive "special rights" from parliamen in other words, all methods are to be made use o by means of which the fascists everywhere subje parliamentarism to their dictatorship.

De Man's agitation for a "strong" State is a solutely obviously ideological preparation for fa cism. In his speech at the Congress, de Man d clared:

> "Yes, we want to have a strong State, but we want it in order to demolish the dead wall of money, while others are striving for a strong State, in order to strengthen this dead wall."

Familiar tunes! Did not Wels, at the last Co gress of German social-democracy, say: "If a di tatorship, then at least let it be ours"? But in *bourgeois* State, where the bourgeoisie owns enormo wealth, where the State apparatus belongs to where it is possible for it to organize private milita detachments and to arm fascist gangs, there can no "strong State" against the bourgeoisie, again the "wall of money". While the bourgeoisie ow the mans of production, while it possesses its wealt it is the ruling class; and every "strong" State long as the bourgeoisie is dominant, means a "*stron State* against the proletariat, it means strengtheni the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and is a st towards a fascist State. De Man's propaganda favor of a strong State is clearing the way f fascism.

We will draw a parallel between the methods which Hitler in Germany came to power, and t methods by means of which the B.L.P. is striving attain power in Belgium. Hitler promised a n social order, a "third empire"; the "labor" plan al promises a "structural change" of society. Hitl promised the nationalization of monopolies; t same is promised by the "labor" plan.

Hitler promised the petty bourgeoisie "to break t bondage of interest"; the "labor" plan promises t nationalization of credits, or in other words, t same thing.

Hitler promised the liquidation of unemployme the same is promised by the "labor" plan.

Hitler wages a struggle against Communism; t Labor Party of Belgium is acting in the same way.

Hitler fights against "Marxism"; de Man a stands "on the other side of Marxism".

Hitler slanders the Soviet Union; so does Man.

In his speeches and reports to the big capitali about his plans Hitler soothed them with assuran that his speeches at the mass popular gatherir

should not be taken in earnest; Vandervelde and de Man are doing the very same thing.

Despite his fiery speeches against "grafting capital", Hitler was friends with the capitalists, just as the leaders of the B.L.P. are.

Hitler received money from the big capitalists to finance the fascist movement; the B.L.P. likewise receives money from the big capitalists through its enterprises.

The language which de Man uses when speaking with the capitalists is exactly Hitler's language. Here is proof.

At the end of March de Man made a report in the big bourgeois Belgian Society of Political Economy, before an audience, which, according to the *Peuple* of March 29, 1934, "consisted of industrialists, economists and businessmen". Well, and what did de Man tell the big Belgian capitalists?

> "Nationalization is only provided for where we encounter monopolies. It is not a question of taking over the ownership, but first and foremost of taking over the authority. . . . *The 'labor' plan does not provide for any decrease of profit: it only strives towards stabilization and profit . . . the plan represents an attempt to find a way out of the crisis which has struck all classes.*" (Emphasis mine —E.V.)

Hitler could have said exactly the same thing, word for word.

* * *

The meaning of the "labor" plan is now clear to every worker. It is a cleverly conceived maneuver for the temporary pacification of the justly indignant Belgian workers, to distract them from the revolutionary path, from the united front, from the Communist Party. And the plan itself is a platform for a coalition government of the B.L.P. and other bourgeois parties. It is a plan of the defense of the bourgeoisie. In the event of it being carried out, it would mean maintaining the profits of the bourgeoisie at the same high level, and the perpetuation of the present day starvation and beggarly wage rates received by the workers. The agitation for the participation of the B.L.P. in the government on the basis of the plan is waged in the fascist spirit, and serves the cause of preparing the advent of fascism to power in Belgium.

The Belgian workers, who have proven their revolutionary spirit in a number of glorious mass fights, must not succumb to the bait of this maneuver of the B.L.P. There is only *one* way to socialism and that is the way mapped out by revolutionary Marxism; the way which was followed by the Russian Bolsheviks, the way of the Communist International and of the Communist Party of Belgium. It is the path of the violent overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Only under the leadership of the Communist Party of Belgium can socialism be achieved in Belgium, and not under the leadership of the B.L.P., whose leaders have long ago merged with the bourgeoisie, who have long been of the same feather as the bourgeoisie.

The place of every class conscious revolutionary Belgian worker is in the ranks of the Communist Party of Belgium!

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THE NEW UPSURGE OF THE STRIKE MOVEMENT OF THE WORKING CLASS IN KUOMINTANG CHINA

THE whole of China has been in the grip of a rapidly growing wave of strikes for some time past.

The economic crisis, the predatory attack of the international imperialists and the treacherous policy of the Kuomintang have created an intolerable situation for the broad masses of the population, and in particular for the workers who have to suffer sharp wage-cuts, lengthening of the working day, the introduction—by order of Chiang Kai-Shek—of the ten-hour working day in Honan, Hupei, Anhwei, Kiangsi and Fukien, mass dismissals, pauperization, hunger and orgies of white terror.

The following facts testify to the gigantic proportions that the growth of the strike wave is taking.

In March a militant strike of 6,000 silk workers took place in Shanghai, being a struggle against the wage-cuts. *The workers of the silk factories, among whom there were many women workers as well, armed themselves with sticks and stones, and for several hours waged a bloody street fight against the police forces. In April a militant strike of* 4,000 *workers of the "Meyer" silk factory took place. The strikers beseiged the offices of the "Bureau for Social Affairs", and as a result* 150 *functionaries and representatives of the factory were detained by the workers and could not leave the building.* The workers encamped in the streets leading to the bureau offices. Special workers' detachments were formed which provided the strikers with food supplies. The workers prepared for a prolonged siege. When the chief of police tried to start negotiations with the strikers, the workers refused to be a party to them, declaring that they would not leave until their demands were accepted. The strikers conducted a militant demonstration together with workers from other factories. When large forces of the police attacked the strikers, *they received a determined repulse. For* 18 *hours the workers fought self-sacrificingly in the streets against the armed forces of the police and in the end they beat off the attack of their opponents.* The latest information shows that the strike is still continuing. The workers published a proclamation in which they wrote that they are carrying on a life and death struggle against the capitalists. In Huchjoi, several thousand workers from the silk factories went on a strike in April. *The workers surrounded the Town Hall and demanded that all who had been arrested be freed.* When a police detachment opened fire and wounded several persons, *the workers occupied the Town Hall after a stubborn and sanguinary struggle, disarmed the policemen and freed the prisoners.*

It is necessary to lay especial emphasis on the tempestuous development of the strike movement in North China. *Since January, the heroic miners of the Kailin coal fields have carried out three general strikes in which upwards of* 50,000 *workers participated in protest against the reduction of the working week, demanding an increase in wages, protesting against the white terror and political oppression, against the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions and declaring for the organization of mass revolutionary trade unions.* The miners on strike engaged the police forces in sanguinary clashes on several occasions, and organized picketing. The pickets were armed with iron bars and long knives and they wore red armbands on their sleeves. The strikers drove out the leaders of the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions and in fact created mass revolutionary trade unions. This heroic strike called forth tremendous sympathy and hearty support from the broadest working masses in all parts of China. It should especially be noted that on February 3, 1934, the General Council of the Trade Unions in the Soviet regions issued a special call to the strikers in which they urged them to undertake an active struggle against the treacherous Kuomintang executioners and against the imperialists, and to organize an independent general strike committee and to make extensive use of armed picketing. At the same time the General Council of the Trade Unions in the Soviet regions, besides sending 1,200 dollars to aid the strikers, developed a wide campaign for the collection of money for the strikers, and placed the question before the Soviet Government of China of rendering them assistance.

Several thousand workers of the textile mills of Hu-Sih and of the cement plants of Tientsin went on strike in solidarity with the striking miners. The workers of these factories, together with the miners on strike, organized a militant demonstration and set forth demands for *wage increases, and for the right to organize revolutionary trade unions.* According to the latest information, the miners of the Machiakow coal fields have again declared a strike against the forced closing down of the local branch of the miners' trade union.

On May First, in spite of the declaration of martial law and the mobilization of all the police forces in every town, more than 20,000 workers went on strike in Shanghai. In many places leaflets were seen pasted on the walls, bearing the slogans: *"Down with the imperialists! Down with the Kuomintang! We will not permit the partition of China! We will not permit a war against the U.S.S.R.!"* Leaflets

with revolutionary contents were distributed in many parts of the city.

The local English newspapers reported that all the Shanghai factories were shut down. *All the workers, including those working in the largest concerns, went on strike.* Because of the printers' strike the Chinese *newspapers did not appear.*

The anti-imperialist struggle of the Chinese proletariat jointly with the broad masses of the toilers of China, particularly the struggle against Japanese imperialism, is also developing alongside of the upsurge of the strike movement. In a number of towns various organizations have been formed under various names to carry on the struggle against Japanese imperialism. The revolutionary work of the Anti-Imperialist Congress, founded in 1933, is being strengthened and broadened. The Chinese seamen and longshoremen in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Hankow often organize strikes and refuse to load Japanese goods. A number of Japanese textile mills went on strike as a protest against the occupation of the North China provinces by Japan. Some time ago the "Shanghai Workers' Committee for Struggle Against Imperialist War" was organized in Shanghai. It distributed leaflets addressed to Japanese soldiers, students and workers, calling on them to join in the May First demonstration.

In connection with the anti-imperialist struggle special stress must be laid on the strong development of the partisan movement in Manchuria. During 1933 the revolutionary volunteer forces increased up to 150-200,000 fighters. Organs of the People's Revolutionary Government and Peoples' Revolutionary Armies have been up in a number of places. The influence and role of working class leadership have very much increased among these partisan forces. These revolutionary forces are carrying on a desperate and determined struggle against the Japanese military. They are becoming a powerful revolutionary force in the struggle against the offensive of Japanese imperialism.

On the basis of all that has been said above, we can state:

1. In China we can observe not only a quantitative growth of the strikes, but also, and in particular, an increase in the relative importance of active revolutionary forms of struggle despite the leaders of the Kuomintang and the yellow trade unions. Strikes are often accompanied by militant mass demonstrations, and by the seizure of factories; governmental and administrative bodies are besieged, leaders of the yellow and Kuomintang trade unions are expelled and sanguinary clashes take place with the police. We see that there is a considerable rise in the fighting abilities of the Chinese proletariat. Besides, the economic struggle is more and more often interwoven with the political struggle. Without this interweaving, "a real broad mass movement is impossible". (Lenin.)

2. The influence of the Red trade unions has grown in the strike struggle and the disintegration of the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions has been intensified.

3. The strikes which are developing in a situation of revolution, war and intervention represent an indissoluble revolutionary link in the chain of the development of the Chinese Soviet revolution. The strikes which are involving various strata of the workers and in the various branches of industry are vanguard fights which are preparing a broad field for the great political clashes of the near future, fights which will rouse and bring into action the backward workers and those insufficiently experienced in the struggle. "In such case, the proletariat plays the role not of just one of the classes of bourgeois society, but the role of hegemone, *i.e.*, the role of guide advanced guard and leader." (Lenin.)

4. And, finally, the strike movement in China is taking place simultaneously with the tempestuous development of vanguard revolutionary battles in all the capitalist countries on the eve of the second round of revolutions and wars: the heroic armed struggle of the Austrian workers, the general strike in France, the revolutionary hunger march in England, the strike movement in Spain, Belgium and America, the growth of the revolutionary movement in Japan and India, etc. The coordination of the revolutionary torrents of the proletariat in the imperialist countries, in the colonies and semi-colonies, adds special significance to the growth in the strike movement of the Chinese proletariat at a time when "the Chinese Soviet revolution has already become a great factor in the world revolution". (Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.)

The Chinese proletariat has proved to the world proletariat by its heroic struggles and by the successes which it has achieved, that it is one of the powerful vanguard detachments of the world revolution. Under the banner of proletarian solidarity, the Chinese working class calls on its brothers, the workers of all the capitalist countries, to still further intensify their active support and aid to the Chinese proletariat in the struggle for the final victory of the Soviet revolution throughout China.

SPRING INDICES IN THE U.S.S.R.

THIS spring the barometer on our planet has set and indicates: "Clear, no change, as if signalizing the calm before the storm!" But in human society, both in the land of Soviets and in capitalist countries, the spring is passing exceptionally stormily, bringing something new every day, bringing changes each day. Both in the Socialist and capitalist worlds, life is feverishly rushing on, breaking down all barriers. But what a tremendous difference there is in the qualitative indices of the movement in these two hostile worlds!

The people of the great Land of the Soviets, in their overwhelming majority, have gathered and welded themselves into a single powerful bloc; and the Party of Bolsheviks, the Soviet government, the millions of workers and the many-million-strong peasantry of the collective farms *essentially* live one life, are of one will, and face one great goal, namely, Socialist construction, the creation of the conditions requisite for the enjoyment of an intelligent, cultural, prosperous, Socialist life by the millions of the toiling population in classless society. The moment the Party sends out the signal that there is a break or lag behind in any sphere of the great field of construction, the whole of Soviet public opinion promptly rallies together, waves of energy roll over the great country, the break is liquidated, and the lag behind is overcome. There are no obstacles which cannot be swept away by this iron torrent. And all this is no longer accomplished in the former way, usual to the Land of Soviets, the way of "storming". The word "storming" is not held in honor in the Soviet Union any longer. The Party is now carrying on a sharp struggle against "storm" methods and impetuousity in work, with the ebb and flow so characteristic of them. Obstacles are now overcome in an organized manner by means of everyday stubborn persistence. Otherwise no improvement in the *quality of work* is possible, and the struggle for quality is now the chief battle slogan of the Party in the Land of the Soviets. This does not imply, however, that routine has set in in the country, that the role of heroism and heroic personalities has now declined in the U.S.S.R. On the contrary. It means that the heroism of individuals is now abundantly fed by organized, every-day, heroic and "shock" work, and by the struggle of the masses, the masses of nameless ones who, however, single out, day by day, hundreds and thousands of "famous" and "celebrated" heroes of labor from their midst. They are heroes whom the Party and the working class promote, make famous, support and encourage both morally and materially, in every way. This is the way the new men are now being forged in the U.S.S.R., in the vast laboratory of Socialist construction, and these people are creating miracles.

Eloquent examples of this are provided by the spring indices in the Land of the Soviets.

The first index of the Soviet spring was the heroic feat of the members of the *Chelyushkin* expedition, and of the Soviet pilots who rescued them. What was the significance of this heroic feat, which drew the attention of the whole world? It was not only the self-restraint and firmness of Comrade Schmidt, the head of the Arctic expedition, nor the tremendous endurance of the crew, nor the bravery of the Soviet pilots. No. This feat reflected something immeasurably greater: it reflected the heroism of emancipated labor in its struggle for science, in its struggle for the conquest of the blind elements of nature, it reflected the organization and Socialist discipline of emancipated labor, and the tremendous successes attained by the Land of the Soviets in the mastery of technique.

The second index of the Soviet spring is the first great improvements attained in ferrous metallurgy for the four months of 1934. When enumerating the shortcomings present in our large-scale industry, Comrade Stalin, in his report to the Seventeenth Party Congress, pointed in the first place to the "continued lagging behind of ferrous metallurgy" and when enumerating the next urgent problems connected with the improvement of industry, he gave first place to the task:

> "(1) of preserving the leading role of the engineering industry in the industrial system, (2) of abolishing the lagging behind of ferrous metallurgy."

Comrade Stalin's appeal rallied the Party and the working class and the results of this are already available. The blast furnace and steel-smelting departments in the metallurgical plants achieved great successes in mastering new technique during the first four months of the current year. For these four months the country received 3,103 thousand tons of pig iron, as against 1.960 thousand tons for the same period last year, which means an increase of 58 per cent, or of 1,143 thousand tons of pig iron. And this forward progress is increasing. Ferrous metallurgy improved its work considerably and exceeded the record of the preceding months. As compared with the total level of the first quarter of last year, the smelting of pig-iron has grown by 60.7 per cent, of steel by 49.9 per cent, of rolled iron by 41.6 per cent. As compared with February of the current year, metallurgy made a step forward

in March alone on the *whole front*, namely pig-iron by 4.7 per cent, steel by 4.3 per cent, rolled iron by 7.1 per cent. An analysis of the quarterly dynamics of the growth of the production in the blast-furnace and recasting (steel, rolled metal) shops shows that the recasting shops have begun to make the first steps towards the level of pig-iron smelting. This is corroborated by the fact that the quarterly plan for rolling has been fulfilled to the extent of 94.5 per cent, for steel smelting 92 per cent, and pig iron 93.7 per cent.

The tremendous increase in the production of ferrous metallurgy is due not only, and not so much to the introduction into the industry of new blast and open hearth furnaces, nor to "storming" methods, but to the persistent mastery of technique and to the better organization of labor. The productivity of labor is growing throughout the whole of heavy industry. The growth of gross production in the first quarter by 28 per cent as compared with the first quarter of last year has been achieved with an increase of labor power employed by only 8.9 per cent, in the same period. If last year (as well as in the preceding years) the increase in the productivity of labor in the heavy industry was brought about mainly out of the increase in the machine construction industry, then in 1934, the growth of the productivity of labor in the machine construction industry has been on the average level of the whole of heavy industry (17.1 per cent). Thus, nearly all the basic branches of heavy industry have begun to participate in the improvement of the productivity of labor. The fact that the winter "seasonal" phenomenon, the formerly usual decrease of production in winter time, is now being overcome, is an evidence of an improvement in the quality of the work being done in ferrous metallurgy. The latter fact is also proved by the increased co-efficient of the utilization of the volume of blast furnaces, *i.e.*, reduction of the number of cubic metres of furnaces required for smelting one ton of pig iron. This was revealed with particular clearness in April 1934, the first month of the competition being held in ferrous metallurgy. For this month, the co-efficient of the utilization of the volume of blast furnaces, as compared with the last month, increased considerably at the Magnitogorsk, Azovstal, Makeevka, Stalino, Zaporozhatal, Petrovsky, Voroshilov, Frunse, Kosogorsk and Kertch plants. The average daily volume of steel per square meter of furnace area has likewise increased in this first month of the competition in a number of the largest plants ("Hammer and Sickle", "Comintern", Lysyeva, Makeevka, Nizhne-Salda, Petrovsky, Stalino, Frunse, Taganrog and Voroshilov).

Due to the heroic efforts of the working class "*the increment of production in heavy industry for the first quarter of the current year* exceeds by almost ten times the increment for the corresponding period of last year". (*Za Industrializatsiu*, April 17 and May 6 and *Pravda*, May 17, 1934.)

The spring indices proclaim that the working class of the Soviet Union has achieved very great successes in the fulfilment of the task set before it by the Party, namely "to overcome the lagging behind of ferrous metallurgy". It has also fulfilled another task, namely, "to preserve for the machine construction industry its present leading role in the system of industry". Let us quote only one example: In four years the Stalingrad Tractor Plant has reached its full projected capacity, having produced its 100,000th tractor, it has achieved a 30 per cent increase in the productivity of labor in one year, and the record figure of 16,494 rubles worth of production per worker, as a result of which all the money invested in the construction of the plant—about 200 million rubles—has been totally covered (*Za Industrializatsiu*, April 11).

The third index of the Soviet spring is the successful covering of the second issue of the "Second Five-Year Plan" loan, which was carried out more promptly than that of the first issue in 1933. The total amount of money subscribed for the first ten days exceeds 3 billion rubles, which exceeds the amount subscribed last year by almost 550 million rubles.

> "The speed at which subscriptions were made excels all the previous years. The unprecedented success in the realization of the loan reflects the growth of the political consciousness of the toiling masses, their readiness to strengthen and to defend the land of Socialism in its economic independence. . . . Is there any other place in the world, any other country, where such success is possible for a State loan? It is only possible in a country where the toilers themselves are the masters." (*Economic Life*, May 1.)

The fourth index of the Soviet spring is the present sowing campaign in the Soviet Union. In his report to the Seventeenth Party Congress, Comrade Stalin quoted the table of gross production of cereal and technical crops throughout the U.S.S.R. and added:

> "Lastly, it will be seen from this table that the year 1933, the first year after the completion of the reorganizational period—marks a turning point in the development of grain and technical crops. That shows that from now onwards, grain crops first, and then technical crops will firmly and surely advance with giant strides."

Comrade Stalin linked up this statement with the idea that "the toiling peasantry, our Soviet peasantry, has placed itself finally and irrevocably under the red banner of Socialism".

We do not deal with meteorological conditions, over which we have as yet no control in the Soviet Union, and towards the mastery of which Soviet scientific thought and the Soviet planning organizations are as yet only engaged on assiduous work, and are discovering grandiose perspectives for the future (irrigation of Trans-Volga districts, etc.).

If we estimate our present sowing campaign from the point of view of its organization, then we can state that the words of Comrade Stalin have already been brilliantly justified this spring.

Formerly, in the period when the reorganization of agricultural economy was in full swing, the Party took the line of extending the sowing areas by all means, but now, beginning with 1932, when the reorganization period in agricultural economy neared completion, it took the line of improving the cultivation of the land, of introducing the proper rotation of crops and fallow, and of improving the yield in general. But the first condition for improving the yield is to sow early and to complete the sowing period in the shortest possible time, for, in the first place, this makes it possible to utilize the moisture accumulated in the soil during the winter, and secondly it facilitates the further operation of a number of agricultural campaigns which take place simultaneously, and which therefore call for a tremendous strain on labor and animal power. These were the factors which the Party and the Soviet government took as a basis when organizing the present sowing campaign, and in this respect it scored tremendous successes this spring even as compared with the last year, which was a culminating year.

We see from the summary of the course of the sowing of the summer crops on May 15, 1934, (*Socialist Agriculture,* No. 114) that by this date 67,207 thousand hectares were sown this year as compared with 53,075 thousand hectares on May 15, 1933, *i.e.,* an increase of 14,132 thousand hectares. While 55.9 per cent of the plan was fulfilled by May 15 last year, on May 15 this year 72.3 per cent of the plan was fulfilled. Last year a turning point occurred in the Ukraine, whereas in the North Caucasus district there was a marked lag behind. This year, by May 10, the Ukrainian S.S.R. had fulfilled 85.9 per cent of its plan, while the North Caucasus district had fulfilled its plan completely by 100.9 per cent. In the past, it was the Kuban which was most infested by kulak elements, and which was most backward in fulfilling its plan. This spring a telegram from Rostov on Don, dated May 14, reported in *Socialist Agriculture* that:

> "87.4 per cent of summer crops has been sown by May 10. For the first time in recent years the Kuban districts finished the sowing of ear crops in record short time, and outdid the North Caucasus in speed. With very few exceptions all the Kuban districts totally completed the sowing of summer crops. Kuban, the saboteur, which permanently lagged behind in the past, has now become the pride of the region. This remarkable fact showed the tremendous power of the Party, and of its advance guard, the political departments."

This year the Azov-Black Sea region (to which Kuban belongs) was separated from the North Caucasus region, and a competition began between the two regions. The comrades from Piatigorsk reported the following in connection with this competition, in their telegram of May 10 (*Socialist Agricuture,* May 11):

> "The Party organization, collective farmers, the workers and specialists of North Caucasus are celebrating today the first brilliant victory in their competition with the Azov-Black Sea district. The newly organized region finished its sowing plan on May 9 in extremely quick time, unprecedented in the history of the national districts of Caucasus, of the Terek regions and Stavropol. . . . Below are the comparative data for the last three years: In 1932, sowing on the territory of the present region began on April 1, and ended on June 15—lasting 75 days; in 1933—from March 20 to June 24, a total of 96 days; in 1934 the region began sowing on March 15, and finished on May 9, 55 days in all. Particularly brilliant are the achievements of the masses of collective farmers in the sowing of cotton, this crop which is fond of heat. Forty days have actually been gained this year. This spring, 5,418 tractors worked in the fields of North Caucasus; good and timely repair work enabled the tractors to go out in the fields without any delay. The average ground covered per tractor per calendar day this spring is 3.8 hectares, as compared with 2.8 hectares last spring. Last year 29 kilograms of fuel were consumed per hectare of ploughed land, as compared with only 24 kilograms this year. This year the tractor drivers of Northern Caucasus saved 5,472 tons of fuel for the country during the spring sowing."

In 1932 our greatest "break" occurred in the sowing and cultivation of beets. In this connection Comrade Stalin expressed himself as follows at the Seventeenth Congress of the Party:

> "In the sugar beet districts where the reorganization of agriculture proceeded at the most rapid rate, sugar beets, the cultivation of which was the last to enter the period of reorganization—suffered the worse decline in the last year of organization, *viz.,* in 1932, the output dropped below the pre-war level."

In 1933 the sowing and cultivation of beets was somewhat improved, but the "break" was not yet

finally liquidated and the crop of beets was below that of 1913 (90 million centners as against 109 million centners). This year brilliant successes have been scored in the sowing of beets. Comrade Lubchenko, President of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukraine, wrote in the *Pravda* of May 11:

"Particular mention must be made of the successful fulfilment of the task connected with sugar beets. If in 1932, the Ukraine only fulfilled 9.5 per cent of its plan for beet growing by May 5, and 48 per cent for the year 1933, then this year the plan of beet sowing was fully accomplished by May 5. . . ."

This year the sowing campaign is characterized by an improvement in the quality of the work as compared with the past. In the article quoted above, Comrade Lubchenko wrote as follows, about the Ukraine:

"Parallel with this, we have undoubted achievements in regard to the quality of the work. In the overwhelming majority of regions a tremendous amount of work was done in regard to clearing the fields from weeds, double harrowing, cultivation, selection and cleaning of seeds. It is characteristic that this year it was not only the advanced leaders of the collective farms who actively fought for raising the quality of work done, but the entire mass of collective farmers did so too. In former years we have had no April fallow, last year only 10,000 hectares of fallow were raised in the early part of May. In 1934, by May 5, already 1,138,000 hectares were raised, or 50.8 per cent of the plan. The Dniepropetrovsk region, which is the most important from the cereal point of view, has already raised 84.6 per cent of fallow."

Great achievements may also be mentioned this spring as regards cattle breeding, this most backward section of agriculture. *Pravda* of May 11 publishes, for instance, the following "noteworthy facts"; by May 1933, 26,000 mares were covered, by May, 1934, over 300,000 mares were covered, according to incomplete data. In the first quarter of 1933, 40,690 calves, 55,726 pigs and 41,069 lambs were born in the collective farms. For the same period of 1934, 76,369 calves, 320,224 pigs and 143,155 lambs were born in collective farms.

The great elation observed at present in the collective farms in the spring sowing campaign is accompanied by a very marked cultural and political improvement in the village. Here is a letter from the Dniepropetrovsk district (*Socialist Agriculture* of May 4):

"Along with forcing the pace as regards sowing and fallowing, the last two decades of April were decades of a *general cultural drive*. Not a house belonging to a collective farm family is to be found throughout the entire district that has not been whitewashed; in hundreds of villages there has been a planned arrangement of the streets, sidewalks have been put down, parks organized and new theatres opened."

The editorial in the *Socialist Agriculture* of May 8 writes of that very same Dniepropetrovsk district:

"After having done with their field work in the spring, the collective farmers developed a genuine mass movement for the introduction of cultural order in the collective farm streets, and in the living quarters of collective farmers. The Dniepropetrovsk collective farmers have gone to such 'trifles', as bringing the wells into order, they even went as far as destroying vermin and harmful weeds, which had entrenched themselves in the areas appropriated by the railways. This growth of organization is only possible if a sharp break has taken place in the consciousness of the masses, if there is a genuine creative upsurge among the millions, manifested particularly in the way the village spent its *May First days*. The day of international fraternal solidarity, the Red May holidays became a festival—dear to the collective farm peasant. Is this not another proof that the dark rural 'originality' is passing away with the former farming regime in the midst of stubborn class collisions, and is gradually giving way to the shoots of a new Socialist consciousness?"

What do all these facts signify? They signify that the slogan of Comrade Stalin and of the Bolshevik Party—"To make all collective farms Bolshevik and all collective farmers prosperous", is rapidly being put into life.

Such are the spring indices in the Land of Soviets.

And how is the present spring passing in capitalist countries? There is no united national spring there; there is a profound split in society and this irreconcilable split is getting deeper every day. There also the spring is passing stormily. But how does this stormy boiling over manifest itself there? What is it aiming at? There, the whole energy of the ruling classes, of the dominating parties and of the State power is directed to the preparation of war, of imperialist war, a predatory and above all a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, to save capitalism from proletarian revolution. This is spoken of quite openly there, without even covering their war preparations with a pacifist fig leaf. The soil is burning to such an extent under the feet of the war instigators, that Poland, for instance, which signed a ten-year non-aggression pact with the U.S.S.R., is not ashamed of signing immediately afterwards an agreement with fascist Germany, which is quite openly getting ready for war on the Soviet Union.

The soil is burning under their feet to such a degree, that Latvia, which signed a similar pact

along with the other Baltic countries to protect its national independence, hastens, not without a blessing from England, to unify its regime with the fascist regime in Germany, hastens to make a rapprochement with the latter, fully aware that it must pay for this rapprochement with its independence and with the return of the German barons to Latvia. But what does a Latvian kulak care about the independence of his bourgeois fatherland, what does he care whether the German barons will once more be able to saddle the Latvian toiling peasantry, if *in payment for his treachery* he will be able to sell his milk and butter in Germany today at a higher profit, while tomorrow, in the event of the success of the German adventure, he will be given a safe guarantee to suck the blood of the Latvian agricultural laborer and the proletarian?

The war, which is being feverishly prepared in the capitalist countries, is the most unpopular, the most hated of all the wars for the workers and peasant poor in all countries. The bourgeoisie is fully aware of this. This is the reason why, in making preparations for *foreign* war, it begins with *domestic* war, with a debauch of fascist terror against the toiling classes, with a view to strengthening its rear.

Japan has turned Manchukuo into a jumping off ground for war against the Soviet Union and is "pacifying" this country, preparing, so it seems to her, a reliable rear there, responding to the guerilla movement by murdering 20,000 citizens, by physical annihilation of a whole district.

In Europe fascist revolutions are being turned out like hot cakes. The fascist coup d'etat in Austria has been immediately followed by a fascist coup d'etat in Bulgaria, while a new wave of fascist terror has been announced in the leading fascist country, in Hitlerite Germany, terror unprecedented even there.

And in the so-called "democratic" countries, fascism is rapidly raising its head this spring in anticipation of the oncoming new round of revolutions and wars. In the period between April 5 to 15, the French government issued twenty emergency decrees which produced 4 billions in "economies" by enforcing cuts in the wages of State employees and in the pensions of ex-servicemen. The Radicals, at their Congress in Clairmon-Feron, carried a resolution to support the government of national unity and its emergency decrees. A powerful movement is going on in the direction of the unification of all parties. The fascist organizations are arming themselves quite openly. Thirty thousand fascists demonstrated in the streets of Paris on April 13. In his speech, Jinieu, the director of the *Journee Industrielle*, the organ of heavy industry, expressed the fascist desires of the whole of French heavy industry, when he said that: "A strong State is necessary if methods of organized economy, as we understand it, are to be applied, for rigorous discipline is incompatible with demagogy. Furthermore, a revolution of disorder can be avoided only by the revolution of order, which is proclaimed by capitalism, and for which it considers itself responsible."

This is the way that the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries who are terrorizing the toiling classes, are preparing for war in the days of spring.

> "But if the bourgeoisie chooses the path of war, the working class of capitalist countries who have been moved to desperation by the four years of the crisis and unemployment, takes the path of revolution . . . the idea of storm is maturing in the consciousness of the masses,—there can hardly be any doubt as to this." (Stalin.)

The way May First of this year passed in capitalist countries is a sufficiently clear spring index in this respect. For example, strikes took place at the munition plants in France, barricades were put up in Paris, 200,000 participated in the demonstrations and May First meetings in New York. A meeting, attended by 15,000 people, took place in the woods near Vienna, where the blood spilled by the fascist government of Dollfuss had not had time to cool off as yet. All this, and similar facts, are sufficiently glaring spring storm signals.

The spring indications in the land of the Soviets and those in the capitalist countries differ radically in quality as day does from night, but they both are evidence of the same thing, namely, that a collision between these two worlds is approaching extremely rapidly, a collision between the young tempestuously growing Socialist world, full of life, and the senile, dying world of capitalism. A juxtaposition of the present spring in these two worlds is sufficient to show clearly what profound and prophetic meaning is contained in the following words uttered by Comrade Stalin at the Seventeenth Congress of the Party:

> "Thus, you see, that things are moving towards a new imperialist war, as a way out of the present situation.
>
> "Of course, there are no grounds for assuming that the war can provide a real way out. On the contrary, it must confuse the situation still more. More than that, it will certainly unleash the revolution and put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war. And if, notwithstanding the experience of the first imperialist war, the bourgeois politicians clutch at war, as a drowning man clutches at a straw, it shows that they have become utterly confused, have reached an impasse, and are ready to rush headlong over the precipice."